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Extra Urban 43.5 (6.5) - 44.8 (6.3), Combined 34.0 (8.3) - 34.9 (8.1), CO2 emissions 194 - 189g/km. Standard EU test figures figures. Image for illustrative purposes only, includes optional extras.







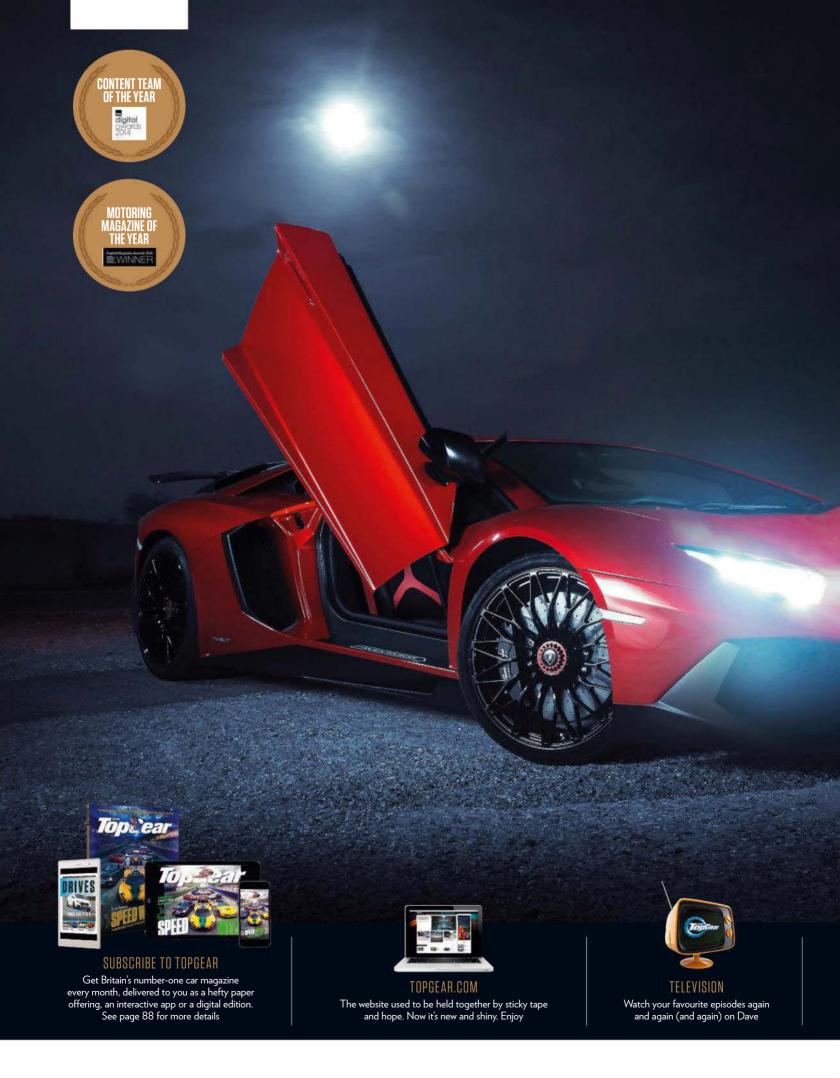
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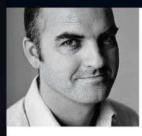


CHRONOMAT 44





WELGOME



It's fair to say that it's been a busy few weeks on Planet *TopGear*, and unless you've taken to living in a cave, I'm sure

it won't have escaped your attention that there's been big news this month with Chris Evans joining the team on 16 June as the new host of *TopGear*. I caught up with him on his Radio 2 breakfast show, as he performed his role as the nation's favourite alarm clock.

What became immediately clear was that, unlike most blokes, multitasking isn't a problem for Chris. I watched as he simultaneously tuned, loaded and processed every element of the broadcast while somehow finding time – with the second-by-second countdown ticking away in the background – to review the papers and edit the many communications that fire into the show from every social media channel, with any downtime punctuated by another question from yours truly.

What's also abundantly clear is that Chris's petrolhead genes run deep. His current and eclectic car collection speaks volumes, but his back catalogue of previously owned icons, including a McLaren F1 and Ferrari GTO, would leave most people's petrolhead appetite sated in perpetuity.

So with the new gaffer on board, the production team being hired and the ideas flowing, we're looking for presenters. If you've spent years shouting "I could do better than that" at the TV on any given Sunday, now's your chance. Send your

30-second clip to topgear@bbc.co.uk, and we'll take a look. Terms and conditions apply, so have a read, get filming and good luck; the deadline for entries is 20 July.

If this month wasn't busy enough already, we've also finally managed to stop The Stig fiddling with the code and relaunched TopGear.com so you can now get your daily fix of *TopGear* on any device. Have a look and let us know what you think.

Somehow among all this, we managed to find time to create another stunning issue of your favourite magazine, packed full of the latest and greatest from our world. Ollie Marriage heads to Wales in the latest ultimate iteration of the performance Porsche 911, the GT3 RS. Sam Philip gets to grips with the 488 GTB as Ferrari goes Turbo, and Tom Ford wakes the neighbours and anyone within a five-mile radius of the New Forest in the Lamborghini Aventador SV. Elsewhere, we send our cultural attaché Stephen Dobie from Sunderland to Tokyo and let him loose in the gorgeous Honda S660, and the Volvo XC90 takes on its rivals.

So, another breathless month in *TopGear* history, and as the show develops and the industry continues to create products that spike our collective interest, the team here will remain totally focused on delivering all the latest developments to you exclusively on a monthly basis.

Stay tuned – the future might be a little frenetic, but it also promises to be fascinating.

Enjoy the issue.



@ Top Gear Editor



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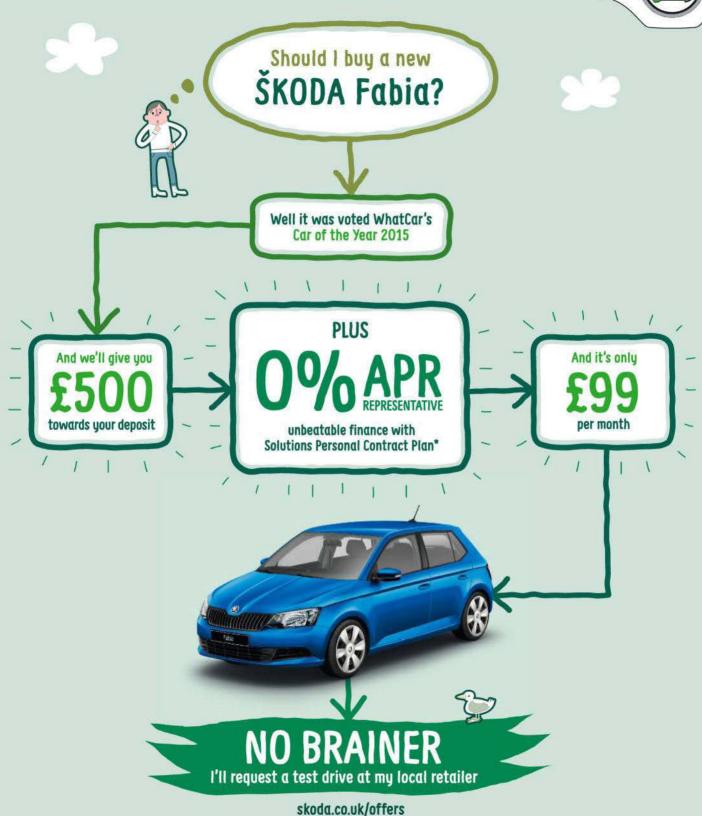


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Available exclusively at WHSmith, Top Gear Portfolio is a collection of the best images from our archive

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Official fuel consumption for the Fabia Hatch range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 46.3 (6.1) - 72.4 (3.9); Extra Urban 67.3 (4.2) - 91.1 (3.1); Combined 58.9 (4.8) - 83.1 (3.4). CO₂ emissions for the Fabia range are 110 - 88 g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.



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AND YOU GET THE IDEA.









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Video: Four FXXKs. An empty Imola race track. Much throttle. Lots of noise. Time to kill your speakers

This is what F1 should sound like. Martin Schmiedmayr

And look like...

Harris Nageswaram

These cars have a heart and soul in their sound that F1 just can't seem to accomplish...

Tekoa Semeniuk

Ferrari should really enter an LMP1 car! **Lawrence James**

I think I'm getting addicted to watching this. The noise from that V12 is just so fabulous. frz1998 I just found my new morning alarm noise. Then again, I won't ever get out of bed to turn it off – I'll just sit there listening all day.

Wasketts

134bhp/litre out of a naturally aspirated V12? Woah!

Unemployed_Northeastern

All I can say about this is YES. That car is perfect.

Taylor

Sounds amazing, but looks slow. Phil Lam

@Effa_3732
Amazing Stig!



@luthercropCan this feature?
An African 6x6



@Fitzy__1986
Sat watching



Dennis Batterink via email

A pic from Supercar Sunday at the TT Circuit of Assen, The Netherlands

TWEETS & STUFF

The next @BBC_TopGear should be in a country where it doesn't rain every day.

@WAUKESLOSH

Dad's flat has no internet yet.
Thank God for @BBC_TopGear
reruns on Dave!
@THEORANGEONE97

Things to do this weekend: empty grandparents' house, DVR catch-up, brainstorm scripts for @BBC_TopGear audition video.

@DIGITAL_VIX3N

@BBC_TopGear until I pass out. Night everyone.
@THE_IJORDAN

Still can't believe the Pope had an Enzo... @KYLESWANSEA



The Stig is now our scarecrow in Loddon, Norfolk

@RISPMM

GO ONLINE AND SUBMIT YOUR PICTURES



Twins? @ElenaCrameri



I found James @stigracertg123





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CRÉATIVE TECHNOLOGIE



CTROÉN prefers TOTAL. Model shown: Grand C4 Picasso BlueHDi 120 S&S 6-speed manual Exclusive+. OTR price £26,665 (incl. Teles Blue metallic paint at extra cost of £520). *Available on Grand C4 Picasso Exclusive and above. "Combined Cycle on Grand C4 Picasso BlueHDi 150 S&S 6-speed manual Exclusive with 17" wheels. "Optional at extra cost on Grand C4 Picasso Exclusive+. "Optional at extra cost on Grand C4 Picasso Exclusive+ and Grand C4 Picasso Exclusive+ and Grand C4 Picasso Exclusive+."

Official Government Fuel Consumption Figures (litres per 100km/MPG) and CO₂ Emissions (g/km). Highest: Grand C4 Picasso THP 165 S&S EAT6 Auto with 18" wheels: Urban 7.5/37.7, Extra Urban 4.9/57.6, Combined 5.8/48.7, 134 CO₂. Lowest: Grand C4 Picasso BlueHDi 100 S&S manual: Urban 4.5/62.8, Extra Urban 3.5/80.7, Combined 3.8/74.3, 99 CO₂. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.

THE BIG INTERVIEW

Series Se

MEET YOUR NEW HOST OF TG AS HE TALKS FIRST CARS, FERRARIS AND THE FUTURE OF TOPCEAR

WORDS: CHARLIE TURNER /

ALEX HOWE



"The question wasn't 'Why would you do it?' but 'Why wouldn't you?"

CHRIS EVANS ON TAKING THE TG JOB



hris Evans does not have a problem with multitasking. A point which becomes increasingly clear as I sit in the studio of his Radio 2 breakfast show and watch him simultaneously process myriad instructions from his production team, read edited snippets that fire in at an incomprehensible rate from every available multimedia channel and absorb the daily papers.

He is also loading, fading and generally masterminding every aspect of the broadcast, with the constant countdown from one item on the playlist to the next clicking away portentously in the background. He's also answering questions from me as the music plays, and doesn't appear to be intellectually overloaded. At all.

It's also extremely organised creative chaos. Clearly, you have to work incredibly hard to make it all sound effortless. Still, if you want to chat to 11 million people for three hours every day, operate as the nation's 'human alarm clock' and not have any embarrassing pauses, you'd better have a gameplan.

And plans are one thing Evans seems to have in abundance. He's been an enduring part of the British media for years and now - as you may have heard - he's taking on perhaps the biggest TV job... In The World.

What's also crystal clear is that Chris Evans is a car person, and those petrolhead genes run deep. His current - and brilliantly eclectic - car collection includes a LaFerrari, an Aston DB5 Convertible, a Rolls-Royce Corniche, the last ever 328 GTS (presented to Nigel Mansell after the Brazilian GP), a VW T5 Camper Van (called Buzz), an original Daimler Dart police car and... Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. Which is a conversation starter if ever I've heard one.

His back catalogue of ownership includes a McLaren F1, three Ferrari California Spyders (one owned by the legendary James Coburn) and a hen's tooth Ferrari 250 GTO, as well as a number of other highlights that'd leave most of our petrolhead addictions sated in perpetuity. So it probably makes sense to begin at the beginning.

CHARLIE TURNER: Let's talk about your love affair with cars. What started it?

CHRIS EVANS: I always answer this question with Magnum PI and the Ferrari 308 GTS, but when I think back, it was things like Magnum, The New Avengers with the XJS, cop shows generally,

definitely The Professionals. I thought the RS2000 in The Professionals was off-the-charts. So, actually, the answer is television.

CT: And your first car?

CE: My first car was bought by my mum. It was a Mini, registration number VJA 879K, in Blaze. It still exists, I tried to buy it back last year, but they started taking the mickey with the money. The second car I ever bought was a MkIII Triumph Spitfire, which was stunning and didn't really work at all, but we fixed it and got it going.

The third car I bought was an MGB roadster, which I couldn't afford. I was a mobile DJ at the time and had massive speakers. Every other DJ had a van, but I didn't - I had an MGB roadster. So I used to take six trips to go to the pubs, taking one speaker at a time, then the records, then the lightbox and so on. It didn't matter, because what that meant was I got to drive my car with the roof down, so I didn't care.

I actually thought I had become addicted to cars later on in life, but if I think about it, I've always bought cars that affected my life in a negative way other than in my car world. I couldn't afford them, they were impractical, they didn't work properly, the insurance was too high, all that kind of stuff.

CT: So what is it that makes cars special to you?

CE: It's the romance, sensing some of the things my heroes did: Steve McQueen, James Dean, Bodie and Doyle. The chic, the panache. I'm not into watches or clothes, I'm into cars. Last night, I got far too excited about five cars and that was without looking on the internet. An internet car session can roll into hours.

CT: But do you think *Magnum* is responsible for your love affair with Ferrari?

CE: I think so, I think that's absolutely true, along with Gilles Villeneuve - No. 27 and all that, because they were red and all such cool cars and such cool guys.

CT: You are an absolute Ferrari aficionado, but why have them

CE: Well, when you own your first Ferrari, you are in reverence of it because you think, "Oh my God it's a Ferrari." No, no, YOU'VE got to own it - it can't own you. So, when I had the idea to create the 'Magnificent Seven' for Children in Need, the James Coburn Cali Spyder was black, and that's the head of the snake, and the rest were the white body behind. I love John Lennon, the White Album, so went for that... also Ferraris just look stunning in white.

People say "Oh, they shouldn't be white." Well, that's because they haven't looked at enough Ferraris. I struggle to appreciate any red ones nowadays other than the absolute classics.

CT: What's the one car decision you regret the most?

CE: I don't regret any of them, because they're all lessons. That's the best thing about mistakes, they're the best lessons in the world. Mistakes teach you how not to do something, which is





brilliant because you can't buy that advice. You can pay for it, but you can't buy it. The most money I've lost on a car is \$7million -I bought the Coburn car for \$12m and sold it for \$5m because it had the wrong engine, which I didn't know at the time because I hadn't done my research properly. Other cars have brought me much joy, Fangio's World Championshipwinning 860 Monza was a bit

of a wow. Super, super goodlooking chariot.

CT: We get the keys to everything. What are you itching to drive?

CE: The DB10, Bond's new car, that's what I'm itching to drive at the moment. But there's so much good stuff around. Honestly, anything from Land Rover or Bentley I look forward to. I know they're the bigger and the flashier cars, but I look at the masterful engineering of Rolls-Royce at Goodwood and think, "Yeah, I

want a bit of that." But then there's smaller stuff, the independents, which are always interesting. I like the cars that have changed my mind on things like stop/start. Hybrid technology and where it's all going fascinates me.

Also, how far can new car design go when speed and power are now way past what is at all sensible? Cars are getting faster all the time, yet roads are getting busier and speed limits are coming down if anything, instead of up. It's like the supercar manufacturers know something we

don't, otherwise why would they still bother? The other great modern-day irony is F1 is considerably slower now than in its speedhappy heyday. I don't get that at all, especially when it's also much safer. Discuss.

Then there's the potential sacrilege of Bentley and their Bentayga, their SUV that threatens to outstrip the Range Rover for posh.

"I don't have time in my life for gimmicks. and TopGear doesn't need them"

CT: What do you think about that?

CE: The same as I always think when a car manufacturer steps out of its/our comfort zone. Please don't; we love you for what you do best. But I'm ALWAYS wrong. Diversification is the name of the game even for the likes of Porsche, Rolls, Ferrari and McLaren with its new baby boomer 540 and 570S. I hear Lamborghini fans are also about to be able to Lambo up the schoolrun with the Urus. I don't know whether to scream, cry or just leave.

On the other hand, I don't mind at all things like Honda bringing back the NSX. All aluminium from collar to cuffs back in the day and now as a super-complex AWD hybrid supercar. Yes, please, can't wait. And as for Ford with their GT racing at Le Mans next year, 50 years after they won the race, and teeing up a classic Ferrari vs Ford battle, I think they are pretty much on the money with everything they're doing at the moment. The unbelievably silly and pointless but brilliantly affordable Mustang in RHD for the first time ever and their continued dominance of the budget family cargo ship market. Plus they really have been very savvy in their loyalty to their hot-hatch/RS market.

CT: All petrolheads have in their heads a three-car garage, which is in a constant state of flux. What's yours?

CE: My old 1960 250 SWB Ferrari California Spyder, the McLaren F1 that I never drove but NOT IN SILVER - yawn - and that first car, the Mini my mum took out a 500 quid loan to get me started with.

CT: Why?

CE: You don't have to dissect a car (you can if you want), but it's just a gut feeling. I think the Cali Spyder is the most beautiful car ever created. The McLaren is both modern and timeless, almost impossible to achieve and could no longer be produced due to all the hand-tying, creativitystunting European rules and regulations. And the Mini as it is the car that means the most to me.

CT: So, TopGear. You said you "wouldn't run for office", but now you're in the office. How did that happen?

CE: I honestly didn't think I would get the phone

call - I was amazed that I did, to be honest. I ruled myself out because I didn't want to be part of all the nonsense that was going on. But then the situation changed, and I wasn't stepping on anybody's graves or toes. I was actually in the middle of preparing for TFI Friday and I talked to Will and he said, "Why would you not do this?" And that's the question. It wasn't "Why would you do it?" but "Why wouldn't you?"

If I make television programmes for a living and love motor cars and love the biggest challenge in the world, why wouldn't I do it? So, 20 minutes

later I phoned back and said, "Yeah, I'll do it." CT: Is this the most challenging thing you've done?

CE: This is, without doubt, the most challenging thing I have ever done in my career. When I took over Terry's [Wogan - the previous Radio 2 host] show, people kept saying I had "big shoes to fill", and they're saying it again now. I don't mean they're wrong or they're right, it's just such a predictable thing to say - and, by the way, Jeremy is very tall, so they're even bigger shoes...

CT: As a fan of the show, is there an element that you hold up as a benchmark of what you're looking for?

CE: Well, what I've done so far, which is what I always do when I'm coming up with new things, is not watch anything back. Having watched the show over the years, I have my memories. I've had to put those on hold, because we have to start from where we want to start.

That doesn't mean we have to start afresh at all, but we've got to say, "Right, what do we want to do; what do we want to achieve? Why do we want to achieve it? What would I want to see?" We start there. Once we've done that, we then have to put together the team. There's a lot of talk about talent at the moment.

Honestly, it's not the furthest thing away from my mind, but it is quite distant compared to directors, producers, assistant producers, lighting and camera men, editors, production managers, production coordinators and runners. I have got to get that team, because, without the team, it doesn't matter what presenters we get.

CT: How quickly have you got to get that team in place?

CE: It's nearly in place. We're so very close.

CT: When do you want to start filming?

CE: We have to start filming really soon, definitely within two months.

CT: But you'll need the presenters in place to do that?

CE: Yeah. More importantly, we know what we want the production crew to do – editorial and location and studio – because we've written the show we want to make.

CT: What about the search for a presenter? Is that a gimmick?

CE: No. It can't be, because, first of all, I do not have time in my life for gimmicks anymore, and *TopGear* doesn't need gimmicks. The only reason I'm doing these auditions is because that's how they found James May and Richard Hammond.

We know from things that have gone on in the past, whether it's *Opportunity Knocks*, *New Faces* or *The Voice* or *X Factor*, we know that there are some amazing people doing stuff in their bedrooms or in their garages. We'd be stupid not to find those people. You don't know who you're gonna find. You might find no one. And that's also why it's not a gimmick, because you're not guaranteeing a place, because that would be a gimmick in itself and you might only be employing a person for the sake of it, so we're not doing that.

CT: So the ideas for a new series are already flowing, then?

CE: We know that the car industry is prolific, that there are new cars coming out every week around the world – as I've mentioned, the raw material and the content is always going to be there. It's served to you on a plate every week. Everybody has ideas, I've got cameramen phoning me up with 20 ideas, so, to be honest, ideas aren't the issue. Like I said before, the issue is organisation. You've got

to be organised, you've got to get the right people in place, you've got to get your timetable and your timeline sorted out. And if you get all that sorted out, it's not a problem.

CT: Is it right you wrote the first show a few days before you announced you were taking the role?

CE: I did a stream of consciousness before that. The stream of consciousness is about ideas and then you have a running order. Running order is about rhythm and windows, so ideas are the fun bit. Ideas are an away day at the pub or whatever. The nerdy bit is the running order, and we had to come up with the nerdy bit to find out what team we needed to employ.

The thing about employing people is that you've got to know what they need to do before you can employ them. It was like that for the production team and will be the same for the presenters, because we've got a lot of talent to choose from.

CT: And what in the show has to stay?

CE: Nothing *has* to, but some things will. I can't tell you what precisely. But it would be silly to throw the baby out with the bath water.

CT: So you'll continue with some elements of what went before, but reinvent around it?

CE: Yes. I've done a lot of research on *TopGear*, which started in 1977 as a BBC Midlands show. It was a monthly regional show and then it got brought down to London. There have been 34 presenters before me, so it's a bit like Dr Who – that's one way of looking at it. But hopefully not Dr Who...

CT: *TopGear* is part of the national debate, and what's next is the subject of a lot of column inches. Do you look at that or just ignore it?

CE: I can pretend I ignore it, but of course I can't, because it's such a massive thing. It's impossible to ignore, and you'd be foolish to, because you have to accept everything. It's like the serenity prayer, "Change the things you can change, accept the things you can't, have the wisdom to know the difference."

CT: You have a big radio show, you're writing a book, you doing a series of *TFI* this autumn... how are you going to fit it all in?

CE: We're talking about 18 hours of television. We just did three hours of radio; we'll do another three tomorrow. It's a television mentality that 18 hours is SO tough to do. No it's not, it's 18 hours! You've got to do it properly, you've got to do it thoroughly and with respect, you've got to do it with depth and quality and commitment and passion, but it's only 18 hours. We're not making *War of the Worlds 4*, 5, 6, 7 and 8 here!

When I start working on *TopGear* and stop doing *The One Show* and stop writing my book, I will be less busy than I have been this year. When I go abroad to make some films, when I get on those planes to go off to wherever we're going, that's the most downtime I'll have had in five years. I can't wait, to be honest.













Official Government Fuel Consumption Figures (litres per 100km/MPG) and CO₂ Emissions (g/km). Highest: DS 3 Ultra Prestige THP 165 S&S 6-Speed manual: Urban 7.1/39.8, Extra Urban 4.6/61.4, Combined 5.6/50.4, 129 g/km CO₂. Lowest: DS 3 DStyle BlueHDi 100 S&S manual: Urban 3.8/74.3, Extra Urban 3.2/88.3, Combined 3.4/83.1, 87g/km CO₂. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions. *Prices and offers apply to qualifying DS 3 DSign PureTech 82 manual when ordered and delivered between 01/04/15 and 30/06/15 and includes VAT, delivery to dealer, number plates, Government First Registration Fee and 12 months' graduated vehicle excise duty. Model Shown: DS 3 DSport Plus OTR price \$20,095. Initial customer rental £4,611.72; followed by 35 monthly rentals of £249 optional final rental £8,515. Lowest and highest Elect 4 Personal Lease examples



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**Optional extra on SZ5 models only.









EDITED BY SAM PHILIP

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT NEW CARS THIS MONTH



BIG THIS MONTH

Alfa Romeo Giulia

Alfa's spearhead for world domination? A 503bhp super-saloon TURN OVER

Still Want that BMW M3, then?

First fruit of Alfa skunkworks is a peach #77AUL HOEBELL

f all the things we know about this beautiful and heart-stoppingly fast car, the most convincing fact is apparently the most inglorious. The Giulia's design and engineering haven't been done in some historic yet high-tech corporate HQ, but in an abandoned Iveco trucks building on the edge of Modena. Bear with us.

There, in semi-secret, 600 specially recruited engineers are free to do what's right for Alfa alone, and on a big budget. No Fiat or Chrysler engineers lurk down the corridor to prod them into cheapskate parts-sharing. CEO Harald Wester calls it a skunkworks – they operate freely and far faster, he tells *TopGear*, than if they were part of the main corporate R&D machine.

First fruit is the Giulia Quadrifoglio. A RWD twin-turbo V6-engined supersaloon. It packs 503bhp, a sophisticated adaptive suspension, carbon-ceramic brakes and positive downforce. At the back is a full torque-vectoring ECU-controlled differential. The roof, bonnet, propshaft and even seat frames are carbon fibre. The doors and wings are aluminium. Weight is evenly distributed front to rear and totals just 1,500kg, and so the 0–62mph is 3.9secs. Those skunks aren't mucking about.



Wester says the engine is "Ferrari inspired", related to the one Ferrari did for Maserati, but more powerful and using selective cylinder shutdown under light throttle to save fuel. He plays, at big volume, a sound file of the thing running through the revs, and the noise does all the right things.

Of course, Giulias will come with many more engines than just the Quadrifoglio. Alfa is developing a 4cyl turbo in two sizes, the larger making 180–330bhp and the smaller one 120–180bhp (though the lowest-powered of them, we understand, might be for the Giulietta replacement, not the Giulia). There will also be a 400bhp version of the V6. The diesel 4cyl range will produce 120–220bhp, and a diesel V6 will do 250–350bhp, but, again, some of those diesels might not be for the Giulia.

Wester tells me this is the platform for seven all-new Alfas, and that they'll share the same all-aluminium multi-link rear suspension. Their front suspension has a virtual steering axis like the most sophisticated hot hatches (to quell torquesteer), but it's part of a double-wishbone system for better handling. Many have optional all-wheel drive. Transmission is manual or dual-clutch paddle-shift, he says.

I put to Wester the rumours that the platform is derived from the Maserati saloon. He retorts that the Alfa platform is "100 per cent new, body and suspension". Anyway, this RWD V6 Giulia is a vast 300kg lighter than a comparable Ghibli.

Sure, not all the new Alfas will get the carbon-fibre parts of the Quadrifoglio

(except the propshaft, which goes across the range, he says, because it gives a feeling of precision and cuts inertia for better economy). But all Alfas do get the aluminium body parts and an "aluminium composite and plastic" rear crossmember.

You might be embarrassed if your boggo-spec Giulia were rocking the Quadrifoglio's rear diffuser and active front splitter, and it won't. But if you squint at these photos, you can see the basic body underneath is a most handsome thing. There's an aggressive and very animate face, its trefoil air intakes a modernised version of what made the Fifties Giulietta Sprint so lovely. The side forms are simple and organic. It's very Italian.

Alfas will feel alive, says Wester – benchmarked against the best rivals, but not *feeling* like them. "In current premium cars, you're cocooned – the steering is light, there's little feedback from the road. It's like you're driving by wire." Alfas will make you "part of the machine", he says. "But not uncomfortable."

So the cabin is simple too, rather than a gizmo-fest. The controller for the menus and satnav, he claims, is "so simple, even an adult can use it".

We won't see more of the Giulia until the Frankfurt show in September, and UK sales don't start until a year after that. But all credit to Alfa for making a splash. Usually when a new car comes along, we see the boring diesel version first and the hot one later. But to get back on everyone's radar, Alfa had to make a splash. This one did it.



ALFA'S BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

By the end of 2018, Alfa plans on selling vehicles six times faster than now. through a new global dealer network. By then, there will be eight models. Except for a 4C-style specialist sportster, they'll all use the Giulia's platform, in different sizes. Even the next Giulietta will be RWD with 4WD options, and come as hatch and saloon. And there's a bigger saloon above the Giulia. So that's three saloons and a hatch.

Because premium carmakers are toast without SUVs, Alfa will have two, Giulietta- and Giulia-sized. There's a third mid-size vehicle. Wester won't say, but as this is Alfa you can assume a coupe. Estates aren't a priority, he tells me, and the MiTo will die.

Alfa Romeo has talked of revivals before. Once with cars derived from GM/Saab joint ventures, more than once with poshed-up Fiats. Up to 2013, bosses talked of creating a range using the current Giulietta platform plus adapted Dodges.

Then they stopped and decided to do it properly. They've now committed £3.5 billion to developing these cars and equipping the plant. It's a gamble, and they need to do everything right. But in Alfa's past, endless underinvestment has always failed horribly. Fortune favours the brave.







It's the Lotus Elise among limos

Okay, it's not draped in carbon like a Pagani, but BMW's new flagship has a 'carbon core' and a 130kg weight loss against its predecessor. Carbon fibre is strategically used in the pillars to lower the car's centre of gravity, increase stiffness and, of course, shed weight – a feat aided by aluminium suspension, brake and wheel carrier components. BMW claims the entry-level version weighs just 1,725kg. That's i8 nous paying off, right there.

iDrive has gone touchy-feely Yup, the love-it/loathe-it

Yup, the love-it/loathe-it infotainment system has gained a touchscreen, but keeps the rotary dial and keypad. The idea is you'll use the touchscreen for logical functions like pinch-to-zoom on maps and dialling phone numbers, but stick with physical controls for, say, scrolling through a playlist. We've had a sneaky go, and - credit where credit's due - it works elegantly, or you can ignore it. Best get your driver some silk gloves.

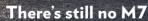
The best toys are up front. Most owners will sit here. Unfair?

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

It'll read your jazz hands

Gesture control has long been concept-car fodder – but the 7-Series brings it into showrooms. Rotating your finger to adjust stereo volume or tapping an imaginary button to start phonecalls is novel, but still a tad too unreliable to be a true gamechanger. Yet. In 10 years, though...

PC World in a business suit — BMW's new tech tour de force



BMW's stubbornly confirmed to TG there'll be no M Division rival to the Mercedes S63 AMG, Audi S8 or Jaguar XJR. Apparently "the values of the M Division cannot be reconciled with the luxury and size of this car". Oh, but the X6 M is OK, right? Anyway, there'll be a halfway-house M Performance version instead. There's a 321bhp petrol-hybrid coming, but the big UK seller will remain the straight-six 730d bi-turbodiesel, good for a theoretical 62.8mpg.

' It's got a virtual Parker

Not quite the full Lady Penelope chauffeur, but the 7-Series will apparently park itself obediently when instructed – without you being in the car. Arrive at your driveway, step out and the 7 uses its army of sensors and cameras to garage itself – and it'll auto-retrieve itself the following morning when called via the smart key. Then there's the intelligent cruise control, anti-crash braking, and a charging cubby that wirelessly juices iPhones. What's the point of humans again?

THE Knowledge

THIS MONTH'S IMPORTANT NEWS, IN BITE-SIZED MORSELS



Ford ups the hothatch power war

Back in February, Ford claimed its new ultimate Focus would have "over 316bhp". Now we know how much "over" – it's a 345bhp AWD monster. Which would be very impressive...



Mercedes wins hothatch power war

...If AMG hadn't decided to give the facelifted A45 a ridiculous 381bhp. Yeah, take that, RS3. Camshaft and piston tuning has unlocked the grunt. Where will it end? 800bhp Fiestas?



It's almost time to say goodbye to the DB9

Sending Aston's lovely GT out in style before next year's replacement is this, the, erm, DB9 GT. The 6.0-litre V12 gains 30bhp and the GT rides on bespoke 20-inch alloys.



This is the new Audi A4. Apparently Slipperiest in its class, nicks the

Slipperiest in its class, nicks the TT's virtual cockpit instruments and it's 120kg lighter. But with all that cleverness hidden under history's dullest redesign, will anyone notice?



Stretch marque

All-new Mini Clubman definitely not an inflated hatch

all the new Mini Clubman "just a stretched hatch" (which is exactly what the idiosyncratic old one was), and Mini gets awfully cross with you. Yes, this Mini wagon is a whopping 29cm longer than before – which liberates a massively useful amount of rear-seat space, and two proper rear doors too – but it's also wider. Wider than the Countryman crossover, in fact, as Mini tackles the Golf and Focus head on by at last building a car you can fit adults in the back of.

The massive swell comes courtesy of a platform pinched from BMW's front-drive 2-Series MPV, along with

the shared engines already employed in the Mini hatch range. The long-roof hearse look is still a polarising one, granted, and the twin-hinged rear doors limit rear visibility and eat bootspace. But bigger dimensions suit the latest Mini's more bulbous form, and the cabin is genuinely roomy. More mature feeling too, with a tall centre console and lots of grown-up tech.

Petrol Cooper, Cooper S and a diesel version make up the range at launch, which starts at a chunky-looking £19,995. Still a hipster's choice then, but this time it'll swallow more fixie bikes.



...IT'S ANOTHER CRAZY-POWERFUL JUKE. UM...

Meet Juke R version 2.0. If you thought the last GT-R-hearted Juke was a bit daft, this is an even more ballistic blow to your sense of humour. Power is up nearly 120bhp, the Nismo GT-R's 597bhp AWD drivetrain shoehorned beneath an even more steroidal crossover body. A one-off, until completist supercar collectors send their blank cheques to Nissan HQ...



Sharpen your reflexes: it's the Lotus 3-Eleven

450bhp flyweight is Hethel's fastest, most powerful road car ever by PAUL HORRELL

even minutes and 10 seconds. If that's the answer, you can guess the question, because you are the sort of person who watches every fraction of your car's speed on a track. Especially a certain hilly, lengthy, treacherous German one. And that's the number Lotus is claiming, admittedly so far via its spookily accurate simulation software rather than an actual test, of the pre-limit Nürburgring Nordschleife.

There's also a fractionally heavier, fractionally slower road version - it's the fastest road Lotus ever. Like the 2007 2-Eleven, the 3-Eleven is a stripped-out, ultralight, barely-legal bathtub on wheels that nibbles at the very extremities of what any normal person would define as a 'car'.

Both 'road' (but still trackable) and full-track versions have a louder 450bhp version of the Lotus-Toyota supercharged 3.5-litre V6. The two versions sit either side







450bhp accessed via an unassuming





of 900kg. This means Veyron-troubling power-to-weight ratios and absolutely premier-league performance including 0-60 in "under 3.0secs". It's a manual 'box on the road car, sequential on the track one.

The bare-bones but savagely beautiful body is shared by both. You can just see the care that's gone into aerodynamics for cooling and anti-lift. Look at the venting behind the front wheels, the aero-shaping of the roll-bar cover, and the way the side scallops feed into the engine air intakes. The track is wider than the Exige's thanks to longer front wishbones. The structure is also stiffer than the Lotus cars that have actual doors, because there are fixed bars in the sides. The racecar also has an FIA-compliant cage.

To cover it all, the skin is made of a new type of lightweight injection-moulded glass-fibre composite, some 40 per cent lighter than conventional GRP. Both versions have a big, adjustable rear wing, but it's even more aggressive in the race version, meaning a startling downforce number of 215kg at 150mph.

Prices start at £82,000; the track variant is £115,000. Big money for a Lotus, but it's a trusted name for driving machines: the first three months' production was sold out on the morning it was unveiled. Total production is limited to 311 cars. Geddit?





the good old days?

267bhp 308 GTI aims to revive the Peugeot hot-hatch magic BY VUAY PATTNI

ince the well-documented glory days of fast 205s and 306s, Peugeot's GTI badge has spent too long in the doldrums. But is one of the most hallowed suffixes in hot-hatch history back from the brink? The 308 GTI suggests Peugeot might finally, finally have cooked up a genuine rival to the Megane RS, Focus ST and the rest of the hot-hatch big boys.

Utilising some serious input from the knowledgeable types over at Peugeot Sport, the 308 GTI is lower and wider than the regular 308, and features a posh new suspension set-up with stiffer springs, aluminium wishbones and a semi-hollow anti-roll bar.

Then there's the engine, Peugeot turning to its 1.6-litre, turbocharged four-cylinder from the RCZ-R. Two hot 308s are on offer: the first, badged GTI 250, offers up 247bhp, and is good for a 0-62mph time of 6.2 seconds.

The second, though, is better. It's dubbed the GTI 270, and delivers, um, 267bhp (that's 270 Frenchy metric horsepowers). It records a 0-62mph time of six seconds flat, suitably faster than the Golf GTI's 6.5 seconds.

There's more serious intent, too. The 270 gets 380mm front brakes, mounted on aluminium hubs with four-piston calipers, along with a Torsen limited-slip diff. Both will hit a limited vmax of 155mph.

There are new wheels. There's a new grille, new spoilers and new sills. There's the option of different paint colours for front and rear. We have no idea why.

Prices start at £26,555 for the 250, and £28,155 for the 270. Can this reignite the magic of the old GTI heroes? Here's hoping.





WATCH OUT, BMW. IT'S THE

MERCEDES-BENZ GLC

Not an homage to early Noughties novelty hip-hop act Goldie Lookin Chain, sadly, but Merc's new rival to the BMW X3, and successor to the GLK SUV. Which we never got in Britain.

Sat upon the new C-Class saloon platform, the GLC is 80kg lighter than the GLK, and comes with four powertrains at launch: 168bhp and 201bhp versions of Merc's 2.2-litre diesel, a 208bhp four-pot petrol, and a 323bhp petrol-electric hybrid. Monster AMGs will inevitably follow.

NEWS



ROAD SAFETY

Good news! Our roads are safer than ever. Apparently

ver watched 24 Hours in A&E? It's an enthralling and very humane caravan of real people being patched up after awful injuries and bodily failures. Medics swarm the victim, each calmly doing just the right thing. Like an F1 pit stop, only with the bloodied and battered patient in place of the race car. But the staff aren't the only stars. They call on rooms humming with bleedingedge hospital technology, and also often buy critical time by helicoptering the patients in. I can't believe casualty departments were anything like this effective a decade or two ago. Miracles, in this modern hospital, seem routinely to be wrought.

Some of the injured are provided by road accidents. If emergency medicine is so vastly improved, you'd expect the road toll to fall, even if the number of actual crashes and their severity stayed the same over the years.

And thankfully, deaths and injuries have been reducing. Per billion vehicle miles in the UK, the rate is half what it was in 1990 and an astonishing tenth of what it was in 1970. So the casualties fall, even as the amount we travel has risen. But that's still a grizzly 1,700 deaths a year, and the decline has slowed. We need to know what's behind the figures so we can propose ways to lower them further. I fear hard evidence is scant.

The car industry claims credit with its stronger safety cells, better restraints and electronic driver aids. Yes, evidence says ABS and ESP have done good. But now they're selling everbrainier warning systems and near-autonomous driving. When I ask engineers whether there's evidence that this new stuff works – rather than just allowing drivers' attention to wander dangerously – they shrug and say "Well, it works in the simulator, but in the real world it's too soon to tell."

Meanwhile their colleagues on the other side of the R&D departments are building endless new connectivity and entertainment apps that might well distract the driver, entirely offsetting the gains made by the safety kit. The insurance industry is distinctly worried about this, but in the absence of actual evidence, who knows?

How much has a drop in drink-driving helped? Look at accident stats from the Eighties, and a frightening proportion of them – sometimes a third – implicated alcohol. Driving after



"Look at the stats for the Eighties. A third implicated alcohol"

accidents = good

a few drinks is more shocking to most people now, and, in Scotland at least, the limit has dropped. An improvement? No one knows if there are fewer drunks behind the wheel, because the number of traffic policemen has dropped.

Pressure groups in search of simple answers say a reduction in rural and motorway speed limits, or greater enforcement, will do the trick. But, in general, people are driving more slowly anyway these days. Extra congestion is slowing them down, and they know better than they did that dropping your cruising speed by 10mph saves expensive fuel.

Many of the road victims on 24 Hours in A&E are motorcyclists, others cyclists, too many pedestrians – especially kids who've been knocked down. Sure enough, only half (and falling) of the deaths in Britain are people in cars. Some 19 per cent are motorbikers – which is scary considering how few bikers there are – and 23 per cent pedestrians, six per cent cyclists and the rest 'other' (bus passengers? Rollerbladers?).

There is actually pretty clear evidence that lower urban speed limits will help these vulnerable road users. Frankly, even if you like driving fast, 20mph isn't much more frustrating than 30mph. In my town, the average speed is about 11mph, so a lower limit would hardly mean journeys took longer. But shouldn't everyone shoulder some responsibility? The cyclists – of which I'm one, often – surely ought to be dressing up in lumo and getting some decent lights at night. (I don't want to discourage anyone from walking or cycling. It's good for you. Weigh up the overwhelming likelihood it'll prolong your life by a few years against the vanishingly small chance it'll cut it drastically short.)

Anyway, it's hard to untangle the evidence of what's helping road safety and what isn't. I've never seen the improvement in emergency medicine cited as a reason, but right here let's give the A&E staff a massive cheer.





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As Porsche raced to a 17th Le Mans victory last month, it helped Michelin secure its 24th win, the 18th year in a row that the French tyre maker has won this legendary race. It feels like a good time to celebrate seven of their best

nother year, another chapter of success added to the Michelin Le Mans story. The first eight cars home were on Michelin tyres but nobody at the company that has supplied winning tyres since the inaugural race in 1923, ever takes victory for granted.

The race remains a unique technological test for Michelin. The company goes racing for one simple reason: to learn as much as it can, as quickly as it can, to help continually improve its range of road tyres. The glory of winning is undeniable but – more importantly – the benefits of what is learned while doing so are invaluable. And serial success in the world's toughest

test of endurance certainly doesn't come easy.

"In 2014, the FIA produced a new set of regulations for the sport," explains Michelin's Head of Motorsport, Pascal Couasnon, "and it was a big, big change for us: the tyres had to be five centimetres narrower which also meant they

became two kilograms lighter."

The challenge for Michelin was to make a tyre that was not only as fast as the previous year's but to do so without sacrificing durability despite having to use less actual rubber. Going into the 2014 race, there was no benchmark for whether this could

be achieved but the new, skinnnier rubber proved to be the equal of the previous year's winning tyres.

But the pace of progress is relentless. "This year, the cars were five seconds a lap quicker than in 2014,"

continues Couasnon. "Some of that will be down to engineering advances made

by the teams, but we know our tyres
have got better again this year, too."

And even though it's only a month since the flag fell on the 2015 race, development of next year's Michelin race tyres is already well under way. Who would bet against them reaching

the quarter century of victories in 2016?



► PEUGEOT 905 EVO IB

'93 produced a Peugeot / Michelin 1-2-3, the 905 Evo 1B comfortably the class of the field once more, following victory the previous year. Under the guidance of team boss Jean Todt, now the President of the FIA, The Australian, Geoff Brabham, and two French rookies

- Eric Helary and Christophe Bouchut – drove the winning car to make it a memorable year all round for the French.

It wasn't the quickest car at Le Mans in 1995, but the race version of McLaren's remarkable F1 GTR certainly was reliable. Four of the top five finishers were McLarens and four of the top five were on Michelin tyres, too, with victory eventually going to McLaren's original GTR prototype, run by Kokusai Kaihatsu Racing.

LE MANS CIRCUIT

2015

► PORSCHE 919 HYBRID

Following its return to top class sportscar racing last year, Porsche pulled off a memorable 1-2 in 2015. It is the German marque's 17th victory, extending its lead over Audi as the race's most successful manufacturer ever and helping 18th win in a row.

BENTLEY SPEED 8

Bentley made a winning return to Le Mans in 2003, 73 years after its last victory. Powered by an omnipotent Audi V8, the Speed 8 scored a convincing 1-2 result, with nine-times winner, Tom Kristensen, grabbing his fourth victory in a row. For Michelin, a clean sweep of the top ten made 2003 an especially memorable year.

topgearadcomp.com/michelin





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THE RACING LIFE OF PAUL NEWMAN TURN DVE

Landing Craft Air Cushion. Über hovercraft time

TOPGEAR ARCHIVE p60 The true story of F1's Lamborghini safety car

MAY'S PUB AMMO p62 Why roads get blocked and the cactus Gatso

A caravan? In *TopGear*? Surely some mistake...



HOLLYWOOD RACER



A NEW FILM CELEBRATES A DRIVER WHO NEARLY WON LE MANS. OH, AND APPEARED IN A FEW FILMS TOO...

WORDS: DAN READ

t would be wrong to remember Paul Newman as a movie star who dabbled in cars. In fact. he became a professional racing driver who dabbled in movies, and only half-jokingly threatened to burn any scripts that interfered with the race calendar.

Yet if it weren't for Hollywood, he might never have discovered his love of cars. It was only when filming Winning, the 1969 classic about the Indy 500, that he took some driver training in order to look more convincing behind the wheel. And that was it, he caught the racing bug. One of the most revered actors in American cinema suddenly had a new role, and it wasn't long before the movies took a back seat.

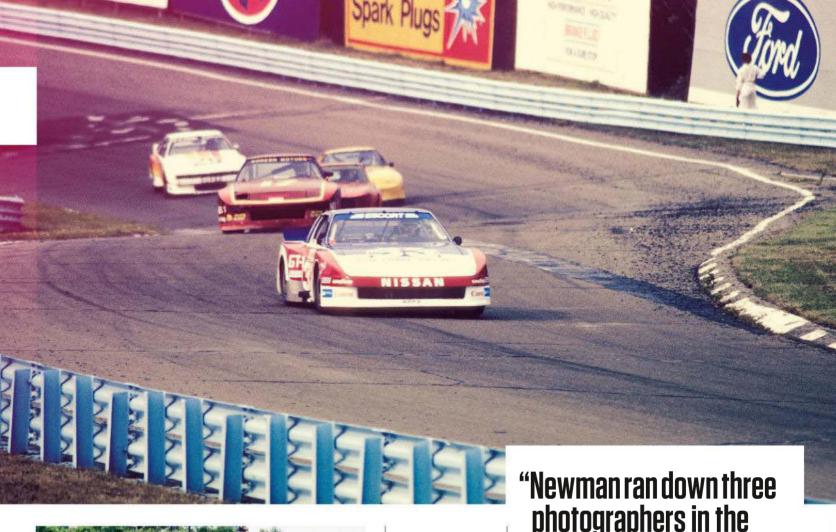
This is the subject of American comedian Adam Carolla's new documentary: Winning: The Racing Life of Paul Newman. Partly a reference to the movie that started it all, and based on the book of the same name, it also tells the story of what happened next, of Newman's rise from rookie hobbyist to a talented pro who would almost win Le Mans just 10 years later.

Despite this, many underestimated - perhaps still do - just how good this guy was. Of course, he looked just as good in a car as he did in front of a camera, much like Steve McQueen. In fact, both men became motorsport pin-ups, though - despite popular conceptions - Newman was the more authentic, up there with the 'real' drivers who couldn't give a monkey's about some silver screen poster boy.

That's why Newman liked it so much. For him, racing was a million miles away from the plastic people of Hollywood, where he could pull on a helmet and forget the fame, even if others couldn't. "He had a big bullseye on his back," says his old team boss, Bob Sharp, "people wanted to beat him." But he mucked in, proved himself where it mattered, and it wasn't long before he had the sort of friendships he'd never find in Hollywood.

"Newman was on Viagra before they even made Viagra," says Willy T Ribbs - the first African-American driver to qualify for the Indianapolis 500, thanks in part to Newman finding a team who'd give him a go. "He was one hard-dick brother."

Newman might have found refuge in racing, but the press was never far behind. At Le Mans in









Paul Leonard Newman, 1925–2008. Actor, director, entrepreneur, professional racing driver, team owner, ecological and social activist, philanthropist and all-round good bloke

photographers in the way of his pit box"

1979, the paparazzi were literally crawling all over him - one climbed the wall of a château to access his bedroom window. This might explain why, during the race, Newman ran down three photographers who stood in the way of his pit box.

But don't forget, he came to racing late, aged 47, and had spent most his life becoming arguably the most recognised man in Hollywood - he was Butch Cassidy, Cool Hand Luke and would be 'Fast' Eddie Felson in The Color of Money, for which he would be awarded one of several Oscars. In other words, he must have put as much work into learning his racing lines as those from his scripts.

As he says himself in the film's excellent archive footage: "[Racing] reminds me of a theatre. It has its audience, cast, drama, comedy and sometimes its tragedy too."

The documentary acknowledges all of that, with contributions from the people who knew him best. It's cinematic, stylish and steers clear of weepy nostalgia, although it's unavoidably moving in places, for reasons we won't spoil here. It feels like a convincing tribute to a man who, deep down, really understood cars and car people. He was one of them. One of us. The one we all wanted to be.

Winning: The Racing Life of Paul Newman is out now online: newmanracingfilm.com











The man with the 'unnatural face on the big screen





There's no Hollywood gloss, but if you like F1 you probably won't mind. Lauda: The Untold Story is available on DVD from 6 July

HAVE YOU EVER WATCHED NIKI LAUDA STROKE A COW?

Then fire up your DVD player and get ready, because that vision is coming your way in Lauda: The Untold Story - a new documentary that tells the, er, now-familiar story of Lauda's life.

In 2013 we had Hollywood's version with Ron Howard's Rush, but this one takes a far more biographical approach, going beyond the bits with James Hunt and the Nürburgring fireball. It pairs this with a history of safety in motorsport, and although the chronology is a mishmash, it's still quite watchable.

For the most part it's a straightforward presentation featuring vox pops from earnest Austrians, often with English subtitles complete with comedy typos. There's also plenty of archive footage, including some hide-behindthe-sofa scenes of the fiery accident in 1976, and some less harrowing stuff from F1's golden days, which always looks good on telly.

But it's the interviews with Lauda himself that provide the most interesting moments. Some are contemporary; others are from the vaults, including one with a bored cow outside his Alpine home. Cow prop or no cow prop, here's a man who weighs every word and overstates nothing. He also knows his mind and speaks it freely, and in a world of pre-programmed driver-speak, this old-school honesty is always welcome.

Take his thoughts on the disaster that almost killed him. "I saw the crash as an occupational hazard," he says. "The logical outcome was to carry on." Or his recollections of the press reaction. "How do you feel about your unnatural face?" asked a German journalist shortly after the accident. "Why unnatural?" replied Lauda. "It's just a piece of thigh in my face."

How does it stack up against other motorsport films? Well it's not as emotional as Senna - sometimes it feels more like a museum-style info film - and it's not as stylish as Rush. But it does add new detail, even if it's hard to stomach. Did you know that Lauda did an interview with a Brazilian radio station while he was still smouldering in the circuit's medical centre?

Performance Art.

The new Mercedes-AMG S 63 Coupé.







Official government fuel consumption figures in mpg (litres per 100km) for the S-Class AMG Coupé range: urban 16.5 (17.1) – 20.2 (14.0), extra urban 32.8 (8.6)–36.2 (7.8), combined 23.7 (11.9)–28.0 (10.1). CO₂ emissions 279–237 g/km. Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. The new S-Class AMG Coupé range starts from £125,605 on-the-road. Model featured is a new Mercedes-AMG S 63 Coupé at £132,955 on-the-road with optional Carbon Fibre Package at £5,000, 20° AMG alloy wheels painted matt black at £1,740 and brake calipers painted red at £620 (on-the-road price includes VAT, delivery, 12 months' Road Fund Licence, number plates, first registration fee and fuel). Some combinations of features/options may not be available. Please contact your local Retailer for availability. Prices correct at time of print 06/15.

ILLUSTRATION: BILL McCONKEY

Topice Our mysterious agony uncle tries to solve your dilemmas. Sorry if he gets a bit grumpy

PLANET / ASK UNCLE TOPGEAR

Dear Uncle TG

The other day I had to do an emergency stop in my Ford Focus, and the brake pedal had a funny 'gritty' feel to it when pressed hard. Is this normal?

Pete, by email

I once had a car with gritty brakes. By which I mean they were black and white, with a Northern accent and lots of crying in them. They went on to win a BAFTA.

Dear Uncle TG

If cars were dogs, what sort of dog would a Fiat Punto be?

Sara, by email

My Uncle Billingham used to ask questions like this. It was only much later that we discovered he was drinking his way through a simply enormous quantity of floor cleaner.

Dear Uncle TG

I have a Seat Ibiza FR. What do you think?

Daz, by email

I have a birthmark in the shape of Helena Bonham Carter. Let's all agree to keep these things to ourselves.

Dear Uncle TG

I think my cat looks like my car. Do any other readers have this, do you think?

Sara, by email

I think it's always worth checking with your GP to see if it's time to alter your doses.



Didn't will.i.am once say he was going to make a car?

Beth, by email

well.he.isn't.

QUERIES

FOR

TG...

UNCLE

askuncletopgear

@bbctopgear

magazine.com

floor cleaner is not

Dear Uncle TG

I was looking at buying a second-hand BMW 325i, but then discovered the car was a 'category C' insurance writeoff. What does this mean?

Sunil, by email

If my memory serves me, category C means 'unbearable smell'. It's not ideal, but certainly better than category G (full of wasps) and Category J (endless anecdote about recent illness).

My local Ford dealer is offering me a pretty sizeable discount on a delivery-mileage example of the 'old-shape' Mondeo it wants to shift from its stock. Should I take it?

Bob, by email

Take it? Goodness, no. I would pay money for it. Otherwise the police may become involved.

Dear Uncle TG

I think of lorries as the elephants of the road. What do you reckon?

Sara, by email

Would it be terribly rude to ask you not to write to me ever again?

MEET THE WORLD'S SCARIEST DINGHY

TG TOP FACT

Due to a lack of brakes, it takes 457 metres for the LCAC to stop.

And the turning circle is a mere 1.1 miles!



What on earth is this?

It's a giant hovercraft and amphibious assault craft for transporting tanks and troops from ship to shore. It's also armed, so you probably don't want to mess with it.

Really?

The image above is not some Photoshop fantasy. It was taken in May by senior chief gas turbine system technician Micheal Macdonald, on Virginia Beach in the United States.

It looks quite serious...

It can carry 75 tonnes and access 70 per cent of the world's coastline, at considerable speed. Which makes it an excellent way to ruin a beach picnic in north Devon.

Is it new?

It's been around since the early Eighties, and a total of 91 have been made so far. Most of those have had a recent upgrade to extend their life by another decade or so.

Is it powerful?

It has four gas turbines – all of which contribute to lift and propulsion – making a total of 16,000 horsepowers. That's roughly double the power of *TopGear*'s magnificent Hovervan.

What's the verdict, then?

TopGear likes hoverthings. And beach landings. And amphibious stuff. So how could we not get all lathered up over an amphi-hover-lander with guns and everything?

SPEC SHEET







ENGINES

4 x gas turbines

POWER

MAX SPEED

30mph unload

ARMAMENT

2 x .50in machine guns, 40mm grenade launcher

RANGE

300 nautical miles

PAYLOAD

5 toppos

WEIGHT

85 tonnes

PRICE

\$45-75 millior

PLANET TG / #006

RIVALS: BLOWING A GALE

THREE OTHER THINGS WITH A BAD CASE OF WIND



1. Zubr-class LCAC The world's biggest hovercraft



2. TG Hovervan Also terrifying, but for different reasons



3. Universal 19XRW Hoverwing Flying hovercraft skims along the water





TRUE





Flame Orange? Relish Red? Autumn Amber? Whatever your colour, since 1965 Autoglym has been enhancing the paintwork of cars and allowing all colours to radiate through.

Scientifically proven to reveal the full spectrum of light for your eyes to enjoy. Only Autoglym delivers superior colour refraction. There will never be a dull moment in your life. Celebrate True colours with Autoglym.

To receive a complimentary Hi-Tech Drying Towel on orders over £35 enter code 'FREEDRY' at checkout.









A VOICE OF REASON IN THE LAND OF THE FREE **PART 13: LOCAL MOTORS**

PLANET / ONLY IN AMERICA

hat are the crowd-sourcing car builders at Local Motors up to these days?

It's been nearly five years since we first sat down with founder Jay Rogers at the

HQ in Phoenix, AZ. At that time, its first customers were building their Rally Fighters. The idea was to open more of the microfactories in different cities and get the online community to keep coming up with new takes on self-build cars and trucks. That's not what happened.

What did, then?

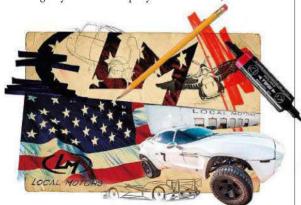
Just as the self-production of the Rally Fighter got going, Reebok, admiring the LM set-up, asked it to run a similar competition to design a running shoe. This made the LM team realise that focusing solely on something as hard and complex as building a car might not be the only way forward. The online community participates in the hope that one of their designs might get made. With cars, that is always going to be a long shot. But with other, less complicated products, e.g. shoes, the chance was greater.

So they became shoe designers instead?

Not just shoes. Everything. After the Reebok eureka moment, LM's crowdsourcing and royalty structure was contracted by DARPA, the US military's research division, to create a light, fast, battle-ready vehicle called XC2V4. Then truck builder Peterbilt asked LM to help with the redesign of its own 389, the iconic bonneted flagship truck. And then BMW called asking for help with drivetime productivity – how to fill your time usefully while sitting in a traffic jam.

That just makes LM sound like an outsourced design department.

Which they realised and wanted to dilute, as that was a long way from the company's overall vision, to create new



and challenging concepts. Finding the contract work increasingly limiting, it created a white-label platform that allows companies to set up their own co-creating communities themselves privately, with LM overseeing.

What did LM do then?

It decided it needed to focus more on its own products. So it launched an e-commerce platform and then curated a selection of its own and others' stuff. The first product out of the pipe was a motorcycle called the Racer, co-created with custom bike builders, the Del Prado brothers. Hot on the heels of that came a pair of steampunk-style cruiser bicycles with a difference – electric or petrol-powered assistance. And then to cap them all, the Verrado electric drift trike was born.

"The group is working on a Caterham-style track car"

What's next?

The group is currently working on a Caterham-style Track Fighter-type concept. In the same way that the Rally Fighter is a stripped-out desert racer, the Track Fighter (just a working title, by the way) will be a honeddown road and track-biased platform that will spawn a no-frills track-day car and a completely separate, roadgoing model with things such as A/C and a stereo.

Sounds interesting. Tell me more.

The track car will be in the \$40k range built (by yourself with LM's help) at the microfactory or as a kit. The company is shooting for an all-up weight of 726kg and a power output of 250bhp. The team says its car has a similar performance feel to the supercharged Elise. It's building and testing prototypes right now, with a view to launching the car in late 2015 or early 2016.

What about the road car?

That's way more complicated, so is going to lag behind the track car. No launch date has been suggested yet.

And what about Strati, the Renault Twizy-powered, 3D-printed car LM made last year?

Still in deep development. The team is working on ways to make it lighter and simpler. LM might not market the whole car itself, but it plans on licensing the tech to others. So don't take your eyes off these people – there are lots of interesting things happening here.





50 3NJOY THE NEW MG6

The new MG6 really is an MG to shout about. It is our best MG6 yet, at just a fraction of the price. Starting from just £13,995, the all-new MG6 comes equipped with incredible value, LED daytime running lights, 16" Alloys, easy air conditioning and one of the largest interiors in its class as standard. There has never been a better time to go large, so why not test drive the new MG6 today?

Or from £8,399, the MG3 has lots of exciting extras including distinctive LED daytime running lights and USB/AUX input. With over one million personalised combinations to discover, you really will get more MG for your money.



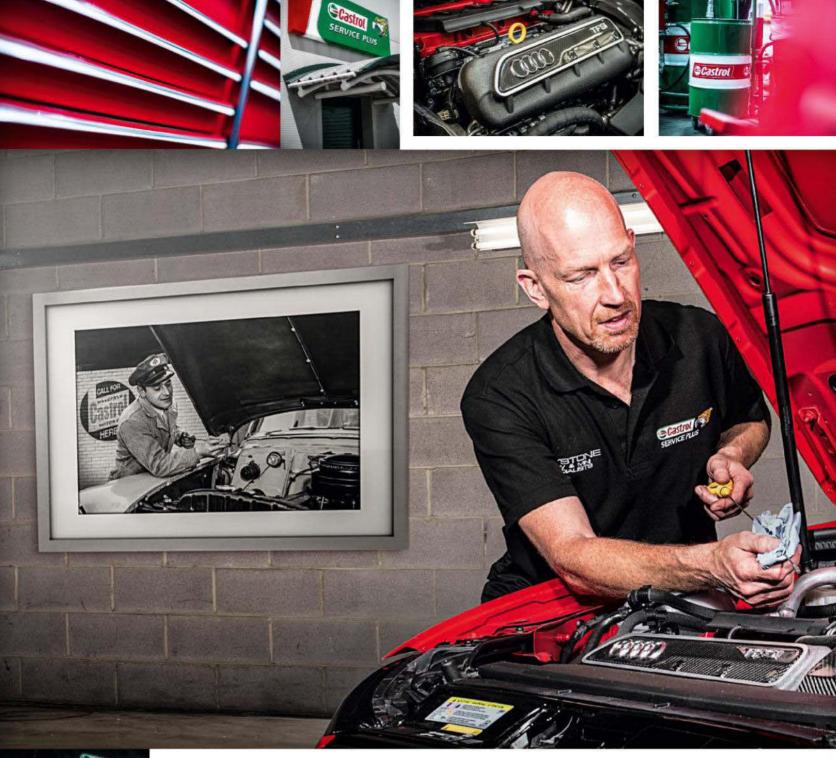
MG3 From £8,399

DRIVE IT NOW FROM ONLY £ 13,995

GET MORE MG FOR YOUR MONEY. Go find your dealer at mg.co.uk

NEW MG6 Fuel Consumption mpg (I/100km): Urban: 52.3 (5.4), Extra Urban: 68.8 (4.1), Combined: 61.4 (4.6) CO2 Emissions 119 g/km. MG3 Fuel consumption mpg (I/100km): Urban: 37.7 (7.5), Extra Urban 57.6 (4.9), Combined: 48.7 (5.8), CO2 Emissions 136 g/km.

Models shown – NEW MG6 DTi-TECHTL in Passion Red at £17.995. MG3 3FORM SPORT in Stuck on Blue with White Trophy Stripe at £10,203. Metallic paint an optional extra at £395. On the road price of £8,399 applies to the MG3 3TIME with no optional extras. On the road price of £13,995 applies to the MG6 S. On the road (OTR) prices include VAT where applicable, vehicle first registration fee, delivery, number plates and 12 months' Vehicle Excise Duty. "From" prices shown exclude optional metallic paint, accessories and graphics packages. Fuel consumption: values shown are based on official EU test figures and are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not be representative of actual driving results. For more information on MG3 and MG6 please visit mg.co.uk







TOMORROW'S WORLD

As the owner of an independent workshop, Lee Alsford is acutely aware that Brystone's quality of service is built around the people he employs. "Whenever we recruit for a new technician," he explains, "there is never a shortage of applicants, but it's all about finding that quality; people with the right combination of experience and expertise are few and far between." But once Lee does 'get his man', it's usually the beginning of a mutually beneficial relationship. "Our technicians are not paid on a time-related bonus basis," explains Lee. "They don't earn more money if they work on more cars. Our technicians are paid a flat rate,

higher than the industry average, and their motivation is to work to the highest standards possible. It's not about getting the job done, it's about doing the job right."

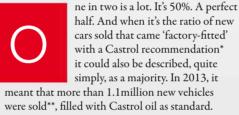
Finding the 'master technicians' of the future is something Castrol believes is important, and is supporting the Institute of the Motor Industry's programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). "The IMI is helping to expand the available pool of future talent coming into the motor industry," explains Castrol's Marc Perkins. "and for an independent such as Brystone, that can only be good news." Find out more at: **theimi.org.uk**







What makes so many motorists put their trust in independent workshops? Lee Alsford explains how Castrol is one of the reasons why



But car makers aren't the only industry insiders to recognise the edge that Castrol offers. Aside from the myriad of manufacturers - and their dealers - who recommend and use a product such as EDGE with TITANIUM FST™, there is an equally well-informed network of independent workshops with a preference for Castrol, too.

Workshops such as Brystone, in Hampshire. Owned and run by Lee Alsford, an accomplished technician with more than a decade of experience in the BMW dealer network, Brystone is a perfect example how a wellrun, independent garage operates. Lee has a very clear vision of the part a workshop such as his can play for the customer.

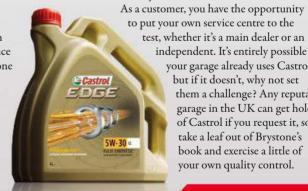
The big benefit of a service centre like Brystone is the

value we offer. We specialise in the repair and maintenance of premium marques; our customers drive expensive cars, but they still come to us rather than a mainline dealer."

And the reason? "We have the same diagnostic resources and expertise as a main dealer, while offering customers outstanding value for money." And in keeping with Brystone's pursuit of quality in all aspects of what they do, they use Castrol products in their customers' cars. "We need to be sure that everything we fit or put in to a customer's car meets the exacting standards of the manufacturer itself. Many of the cars we service left the factory filled with Castrol - why wouldn't we do the same?"

> As a customer, you have the opportunity to put your own service centre to the test, whether it's a main dealer or an

> > your garage already uses Castrol but if it doesn't, why not set them a challenge? Any reputable garage in the UK can get hold of Castrol if you request it, so take a leaf out of Brystone's book and exercise a little of your own quality control.





WIN FUEL FOR A YEAR!

Enter the Love Your Garage competition and both you and your nominated independent workshop could win great prizes! For you it's the chance to fill up your car for up to a year with £1,000 of BP fuel; for your local garage, there's the chance to send a technician on an IMI training programme worth £3,000 and unique recognition in the form of the garage name appearing on the tail fin of Britain's 2016 land speed record challenger, Bloodhound SSC. Enter the **EXCLUSIVE Love** Your Garage competition at:

topgear.com/feeltheedge





FLY TIPPING

Mayflies swarm a Pennsylvania bridge, forming inches-deep piles on the road and causing motorcycles to crash



IINDER PRESSURE

Panamanian TV show puts pressure pads in capital's potholes that, when run over, automatically tweet the government.



CRUSHING DEFEAT

Learner driver in Germany pulls out in front of British tank. Car is half squashed. Thankfully driver is not.



DRIVE-THROUGH

Bristol crooks ram raid a travel agency. Realise it's the wrong shop. Then smash the one next door.



BACON ROLL

Over 2,000 piglets escape into Ohio woods after US truck overturns. Resulting hog hunt proves only partly successful.



"We're disappointed where they've gone with the cars, the lap times. They're just not stimulating for the drivers, and this is rubbing off. The fans can see this."

Mark Webber on what today's F1 drivers think of their offices.

> "When I stepped up from F2 to F1, I shat my pants."

Three-time F1 world champ Niki Lauda tells a German newspaper modern F1 cars should be "harder to drive".



"It's not a Kia but it's still good. I don't know if I can change the colour, because the colour is a little too much for me."

Tennis ace and Kia ambassador Rafael Nadal, after winning an AMG GT in a tournament



FALSE ALARM

Emergency vehicles sent to US farm after suspected plane crash. Turns out the farmer was playing with his jet truck



DYE ANOTHER DAY

Russian trucker covered in thick yellow goo after colliding with tanker carrying paint for road markings



NO JAGS

Lord "Two Jags" Prescott has been banned from driving for six months and fined £250. From MP to Omph...



FAIR COP

Citroen Berlingo driver is fined nearly £1k and gets five points after failing to move out of the middle lane on the M62



STAR IN AN UNREASONABLY PRICED CAR

This month: Harrison Ford

Car: Tesla Model S Verdict: In Insane mode, the P85D will shoot through space and time like the Millennium Falcon. So it's a good job that Han Solo's at the wheel, eh?

PHOTOS: PA IMAGES, GETTY, CORBIS, EPA, SWNS



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K&N® high-flow air filters are designed to increase horsepower with up to 50% more airflow. And with five-minute installation, better performance doesn't get much easier. Order yours online today.



SUPERIOR AIRFLOW. SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE.™

HOTOS: MATHIEU HEURTAULT, DPPI, LAT, PA IMAGES



efore the Mercedes

monopoly, Formula One safety cars came

in many shapes and sizes. The first one

appeared in 1973 in Canada, when

its driver - Eppie Wietzes - slotted his yellow Porsche 914 in exactly the wrong

place, splitting the field and allowing

be no official, FIA-supplied safety car

for another 20 years. In the interim,

After its comical debut, there would

the leading drivers to gain a lap.



From the TG archive

HOW TO LEAD THE FORMULA ONE CONGALINE IN STYLE

WORDS: DAN READ IMAGE: RAINER W. SCHLEGELMILCH/GETTY

it was up to the circuits to provide one. Of course, being home of the rich, orange and awful, Monaco decided its would be a Lamborghini Countach. It was deployed between 1981 and 1983, topped by the least aerodynamic light bar the world has ever seen.

When the course car made its official comeback in 1993, it was still up to the circuits to provide a vehicle and driver. Among the proper ones, up there with Monaco's Lambo, were Silverstone's Sierra Cosworth, and Argentina's Clio Williams. But for every Countach or Cossie there was a complete dustbin.

Often they would just slap stickers on some banger they found in the paddock. Who could forget Imola's Vectra? Or Brazil's Fiat Tempra? Some were so slow, they caused more trouble than they prevented. Just ask Taki Inoue, who had his legs broken by a ropey Tatra 623 in Hungary (see pic, left).

It wasn't until 1996 when Mercedes stepped in with a set of C36 AMGs. Since 2000, the pace car has been driven by Bernd Mayländer, who - at the 2006 Australian Grand Prix - led more laps than anyone except race winner Fernando Alonso.

NEXT MONTH: BRANDENBURG GATE TRAFFIC JAM



A safety car driver

2. WHAT

A Lambo Countach

3. WHERE Monaco

4. WHEN







THIS MONTH'S TOP LOT

Porsche 956

Engine: 2649cc flat-six <mark>lear:</mark> 1982 en: 15 August, Gooding & Company
Estimate: \$7m-\$9m

Porsche built just 10 works 956s, and this one, 956-003, was the most successful of the lot. the most successful of the lot. In 1982, Porsche entered it in the Le Mans 24 Hours. Jochen Mass and Vern Schuppan guided it to a second-place finish, between two other 956s. It would win its next four races, with such drivers as Jacky Ickx and Derek Bell behind the wheel.

But it wasn't until the following year, 1983, that 003 earnt its stripes. Americans Al Holbert and Hurley Haywood joined Schuppan, and together they drove 003 to an outright win, beating Bell and Ickx's 956 by just 63 seconds. Which, after 24 hours, isn't many. Schuppan bought it soon after. Three more owners later, it'll cross the auction block mid-August.









Download the interactive iPad & iPhone editions









LAW OF ATTRACTION 1

Among other things, male bowerbirds can flawlessly mimic the sound of a car alarm, and have been known to do vocal impressions of engines, chainsaws and camera shutters. If these mating calls worked for humans, I literally wouldn't be able to leave my workshop.



LAW OF ATTRACTION 2

American petrochemical giant Sunoco has made an aftershave that smells of fuel, oil, tyres and exhaust fumes. Burnt Rubber Cologne, as it's known, is also scented with just enough sweet and spicy notes to balance the other aromas. Presumably it can be used to negate the effects of point 1, above.



PARK AND HIDE

Built at a cost of \$900m, the Estádio Nacional de Brasília – one of the venues for last year's football World Cup – is now being used as a parking lot for buses. The local team, Brasília, attracts just 5,000 fans per game to the 72,000-seat stadium, so the owners must find other ways to make money from the spectacularly expensive facility for which there's no real use.



ALL BACKED UP

The main causes of lane closures on British roads

Breakdowns

14%

Roadworks

8%

8%

Obstructions

Collisions

5%

3%

Police checks

Pedestrians

1.5%

Burst tyres



Loose animals

0.2%

Suicides

18.4%

Others (including abandoned vehicles and objects thrown onto the road)



How to... trail brake



- Strictly speaking, the term 'trail braking' refers to the technique of staying on the brakes into a turn, and then gradually releasing them.
- Traditional police-style roadcraft driving manuals always advocate getting all that braking, gearchanging and soiling-your-pants stuff over and done with while you're still going in a straight line. Then you make the turn.
- However, there are obvious advantages to trail braking. You brake later, so go faster for longer on the straight bits. Braking during the turn will transfer weight forwards, which can help banish understeer and make for a tighter turn. What's not to like?
- The sudden and inexplicable collision with the Armco, for starters. Transferring weight forward is all very well, but there's only so much of it, and that means less at the back. So you're potentially more likely to spin. Also, braking requires grip, because brakes can only be as good as your tyres. So if you're using grip to brake, you have less for holding onto the road while you turn. It's physics, so you don't get owt for nowt, even outside of Yorkshire.
- On the track, trail braking (if you can master it) could turn you into a heroic helmsman. Meanwhile, people down the pub who claim to have been trail braking are probably talking old toot. What they mean is they weren't paying attention, and there are two dead-straight skid marks on the approach to a bend somewhere, and another one in their trolleys.

HAS JAMES EARNED A PINT FOR THIS TOP TIP?





ENDURANCE TYRE GEL

For years, car enthusiasts have loved Meguiar's Endurance Tyre Gel, because it lasts weeks even through the rain. Simply put it is our best longest-lasting tyre dressing ever.

Free Endurance Tyre Gel Sample

For a **free** sample, of Meguiar's Endurance Tyre Gel, simply visit www.meguiars.co.uk and click on the contact us button. Or call the Customer Care Team on 0870 241 6696 and quote ENDTG.



meguiars.co.uk













DUB BOX

The Dub Box is not a chopped-up campervan. It might look like the rear end of a classic Volkswagen bus, but it's actually a proper, working caravan with a one-piece fibreglass shell on a modern chassis. It's handmade in England, and the options list is pretty much infinite, with many different colours. cupboards, cookers, cabinets, sinks, sofas, beds, tables and pop-tops. In fact, the only standard bits are the wheels, tow bar and bodyshape (available in two sizes, including a 'shortie' version). At 750kg it's also very light, meaning you can haul it with almost anything, including an original VW camper, so it becomes a rolling extension.

Ordinarily *TopGear* would murder such a convoy with fire. Not this time. **From £11,000; dub-box.com**



FUGOO TOUGH SPEAKER

It's a portable Bluetooth speaker made for some rough and tumble. Waterproof, mudproof, snowproof and shockproof, it could take a proper kicking in a backstreet garage while pumping out awful power ballads for 40 hours on end. £142; amazon.co.uk



CANDY LAB MO-TO CARS

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WATCHES

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CHRISTOPHER WARD C8 P7350

It's not unusual for watchmakers to put bits of other things in their creations, from fragments of F1 engines to specs of moondust and even fossilised dinosaur droppings. This one from Christopher Ward contains a piece of metal from 'P7350', the only remaining airworthy Spitfire from the Battle of Britain. It's not the first time a slice of old warbird has found its way into a watch – Bremont did the same thing with the EP120 – though this particular plane has a properly spiffing history. James May will also notice the dial's resemblance to the Smith Mkll A clock found in the P7's cockpit, and watch fetishists will appreciate the hand-wound movement, certified by the Swiss authority that approves the world's toughest, most accurate calibres. It might cost the same as a second-hand hatchback, but in watch terms it's an absolute bargain. £3,495; christopherward.co.uk



AUDEMARS PIGUET ROYAL OAK CONCEPT LAPTIMER

In 2010, Audemars Piguet was tasked by Michael Schumacher with making this, the first mechanical chrono capable of recording multiple lap times. Most proceeds go to the ICM Brain & Spine Institute. £150,000; audemarspiguet.com



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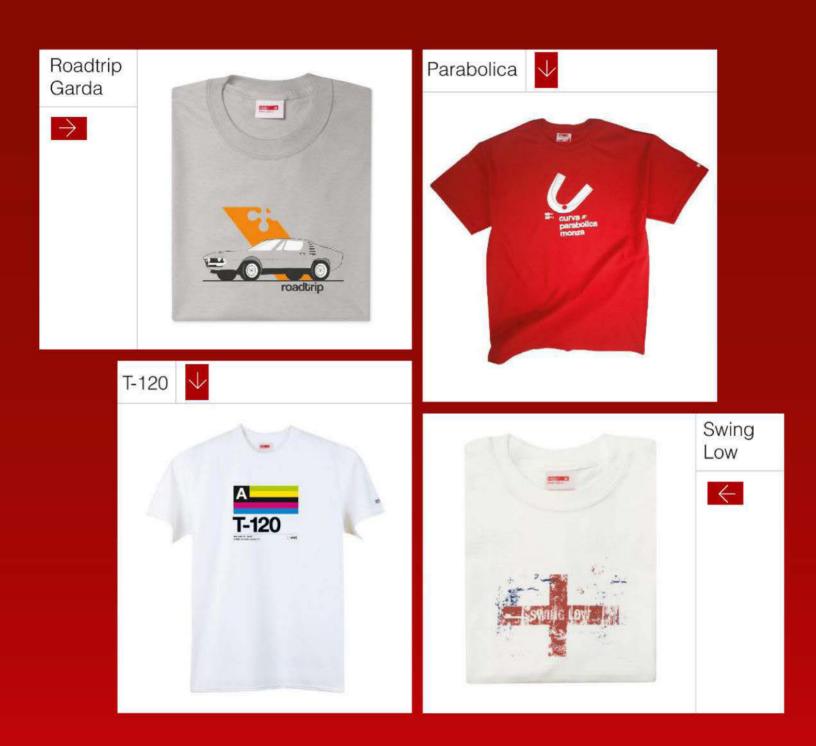
The solar-powered Edifice range has always packed many gizmos – alarms, multiple timezones, etc – controlled by a complex sequence of button pushing. This one fixes that by linking to an app, from which you control all the functions. £300; casioonline.co.uk



OPTIONS LIST

HANHART PRIMUS SURVIVOR PILOT

Hanharts were among Steve McQueen's favourites. This one features the company's distinctive red pusher, originally designed to stop pilots from unintentionally resetting the chrono. £3,050; pageandcooper.com



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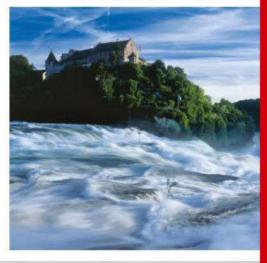








'VIGOROUS HAIRPINS MELT INTO LONG, SWEEPING BENDS'





ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

his is the stuff of motoring dreams. Covering almost 1,000 miles of twisting asphalt, cobbles and mountain tracks, the Grand Tour of Switzerland brings you up close and personal with some of the most spectacular eye candy on the planet. It's a petrolhead's utopia – and winner Ian Heskins agrees.

"Driving is my biggest obsession," says the Top Gear mega-fan. "For the last 20 years I've had my main car, and some sports cars on the side for fun." So when the phone rang to tell him he'd won a week touring the Swiss Alps, he didn't hesitate. Within a week, and with the keys to an Audi A5 Quattro grasped firmly in his hand, Ian and his wife Teresa were setting off on their own Grand Tour.*

After landing in Zurich they headed south under clear blue skies. Kicking off with a cruise down to St Moritz, via Appenzell, and the first of many mountain passes, Ian was immediately impressed. "We had pretty high expectations of Switzerland's beauty," he says. "And it's exceeded all of them."

The next few days saw them dodging pelotons on their way to Locarno, in the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino, via the famous (and stunning) San Bernardino pass. The descent is electrifying – vigorous hairpins at the top melt into long, sweeping bends as you reach the lower regions.

It was Ian's driving highlight. "[It] certainly focused my attention," he says. "The vertical drop-offs on the other side of the barriers were a great incentive to stay on the black stuff."

The Grand Tour is designed to take in the best Switzerland has to offer, but behind the wheel of the car you're in total control of your route. Exploration and deviation are part of the fun – and Ian and Teresa did plenty of that. One of their favourite spots was the Rhine Falls (left) – Europe's highest waterfall – where you can while away a good few hours watching the crashing waters.

Their final few days were spent darting between Zermatt, Vevey and Gstaad – with a quick stop off to visit the last recording studio of Ian's favourite band – seminal glam-rockers Queen – in Montreux. From there it was a final sprint to the finish line back in Zurich, via the ancient city of Lucerne.

So how did they feel when it was over? "It was everything we expected and more," says Ian. "I think everyone has a picture of Switzerland in their heads – Alpine meadows and mountain peaks. And it's exactly that, but even bigger, better and far, far more beautiful."

*Flights and car hire for the winners were provided by SWISS and Europcar

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try to approach every car with an open mind, but I was happy to make an exception for this one. First thing, AMG's hyper-powered versions of Mercedes's big SUVs have never had much finesse, and fast lorries aren't my thing. Secondly, the whole idea of a sport-utility coupe is in any case clearly an assault on good sense. Like a pair of high-heeled trainers... but people buy them too. And yet by the end of my time with it, the AMG GLE63 Coupe had gone a long way towards melting my prejudices.

The GLE Coupe - available as a

engines as well as this high-test Mercedes-AMG version - turns out to be a bit of a looker. Certainly much sweeter than the GLE on which it's based (see over). The Coupe has Mercedes' new generation of soft, flowing surfaces, so it dodges the angry-mastiff aggression of the BMW X6. From the back, the arched window, tapering pillars, strong haunches and horizontal tail lights bring to mind the S-Class coupe and even, if you employ a squint, the AMG GT. It manages to look smaller than it is. This particular car's optional 22-inch wheels also confuse the sense of scale.

The front cabin is lushly furnished,

Mercedes-Benz with more moderate and in the back there's enough room

SNAPSHOT

IN DETAIL



Powertrain and suspension are highly configurable



Big, fast car needs big, strong brakes. AMG obliges



Rear visibility very limited, so reversing camera standard

for grown-ups, plus the boot is huge. So the 'utility' part of the SUV acronym survives intact.

What about the 'sport'? Well the engine is never in doubt. Downsizing be damned - this twin-turbo V8 isn't AMG's new 4.0-litre but the more senior 5.5 job, because it has more torque. Certainly age hasn't withered it. It's vastly effective and alluring. This S model makes 577bhp and 560lb ft of torque (there's also a slightly less nutty non-S version in some markets but not the UK). At low revs, it's so effortless you'd struggle to believe 2,275kg is involved. Add more revs and throttle travel into the drama, and it flings you down the runway with the authority of a quartet of Rolls-Royce Trents.

This is a fabulous car for overtaking. Your high viewpoint gives you an early advantage in peering over verges and hedges to check the next straight. When you get there, the immense traction allows you to put a wheel on the dusty edge of the road as you squirt past. Mind you, be aware that if the engine is switched to Sport mode or the transmission to manual, gearshifts are accompanied by a bellicose explosive popping from the exhaust. Not only are

🍣 5461cc twin-turbo V8, 4WD, 577bhp, 560lb ft 📵 23.7mpg, 278g/km CO, 👛 0-62mph in 4.2secs, 155mph 💪 2275kg 🔑 £95.400









you suddenly filling that Micra driver's windscreen with your vast back bumper, you're probably making him think he's on the wrong end of a firing squad.

Which might give him a heart attack, but I never felt nervous driving this AMG. The brakes and cornering are immensely secure. The Coupe is wider and lower than the boxier GLE, with some different chassis elements, and it's only the Coupe's arches that can fit the said 22-inch wheels. Smeared around them are, at the back, 325-section tyres. They're held rigorously upright by air suspension, adaptive damping and active anti-roll bars. These measures are standard procedure for hyper-powered SUVs, and they mean you won't unstick them on the road. The AMG can dish out mild understeer on the way into a corner and, if you've inhibited the ESP, a slither of oversteer on the way out, especially in the Sport or Sport+ chassis/powertrain modes. But those attitude shifts are very



BMW X6M Slightly more engaging to drive, but we can't see past

its aggressive styling. Is it just us?

VERDICT

Blisteringly fast, surprisingly useful and not too brutallooking.





Underneath, Mercedes' big SUVs aren't as carlike as BMW's. The GLE Coupe as well as the regular GLE and new GLS use a special platform, rather than one adapted from the E-Class. Which means they have heavier suspension. It's better able to do the off-road thing. But you can feel the weight of those components as a series of small but flabby aftershocks after

every suspension event. Otherwise, the ride comfort is pretty civil.

In fact, generally this is an easy car to rub along with, greasing its way through town without the shunts or snorts you might expect. It feels like a limo after the uncouth AMG G-Class, but I guess that's not saying much. It's well-equipped in any case, and a small burrow in the options list will kit it out with a handsomely clever driving-assistance package for those long UK motorway hauls when you aren't troubling the 155mph limiter.

Oh, and you can optionally raise that limiter to 174mph provided you've earned your prefect's badge at the AMG Driving Academy. You need to be worthy of this car, which reckons it's great at everything. It might have a point.





a model citizen, but it wasn't criminally bad. Yet it's now travelling under the alias GLE. New name, yes. New car, not so much. In a ruse familiar to reformed outlaws afraid of scoresettling from their former associates, this is evidently an ML with cosmetic surgery about the face.

Sadly this face is grafted onto what is, to my eyes, the least attractive and most over-styled of all the three generations of ML. Still, it's got a very nice cabin, which is what matters when you're driving it, and if you want an ornament for your driveway then get the GLE Coupe - see the previous pages.

Mercedes-Benz, having pretty much run out of trademarks, is undergoing a wholesale badge rationalisation.





OFF-ROAD

£2k extra brings low-range, centre diff lock, extra clearance and skid plates. It tackled lopes that made







The GLE range kicks off with a 250d four-cylinder diesel, then steps up to the £55,875 V6 350d. I tested that one, and it's an amiably quiet engine, providing worthwhile shove when you need it, slickly integrated with its ninespeed auto 'box. Air suspension is standard. It all makes for a relaxed and calming vehicle. If you try to hustle it, it'll push back with lots of pitch and roll. Best to be decorous, staying below the limits. That way, it's soothing and relaxed, yet surprisingly brisk. It's how the best Mercedes generally feel.



Comfy, calm, unstoppable off-roader. **Plug-in option** isn't crazily priced.

GL is the new standard prefix for Mercedes crossovers, followed by a letter for the size. Hence GLA for the A-Class-sized one, the upcoming GLC (C-Class-sized), this GLE and its GLE Coupe offshoot, and finally GLS for the GL once it's got its own facelift in a few months' time.

There's an AMG version at the top of the range, but more intriguing is the GLE 500e. This is a plug-in hybrid, motivated by a 333bhp V6 plus a 116bhp electric motor, both going via the auto 'box and 4WD system. Starting on a full battery, I managed almost 20 miles without the engine, except when I wanted to overtake something and the V6 lent a hand strongly and seamlessly. On a 40-mile journey it showed 59mpg.

Usual caveat: I'd used more energy than just what was in the fuel, because of the electricity. Because the battery is relatively small, it can charge in only three hours off a mains socket, so you might use it this way. The car deploys its charge effectively, using GPS to figure out when best to use electricity or petrol. The transitions between the two are so smooth as to be all but unnoticeable. At a rated 78g/km CO₂, it's a canny way to save tax.





W

e've already sampled the fourth-gen MX-5 a couple of times and, well, we're smitten. As an exemplar for Mazda's carefully

metered development of the MX-5's friendly, foolproof persona, the littlest 1.5 version seems nigh-on perfect.

But for just £850 extra, this 2.0 not only swells power by 29bhp and torque by 37lb ft, cutting the 0–62mph time by a second, but it also brings with it 17in alloys and sharper mechanicals, including a limited-slip diff at the driven rear axle.

While it shares its 158bhp output with the old MX-5 2.0, this engine is totally new. As well as being 8kg lighter than before, it sits lower and further back in the chassis to assist the centre of gravity. Both driver and passenger also sit lower, and ought to know each other well to appreciate being 30mm closer together, again benefiting balance.

Balance is a core word for the wee Five, of course. And it continues to joyously and









TOYOTA GT86 40bhp healthier, but you can't flip the roof

accessibly prove the worth of a good old-fashioned front-engine/rear-drive layout. You don't need to be a drift god to appreciate how well set up it is, either.

Quite the opposite, in fact, given how much it pitches and rolls into corners. While other carmakers run off to their labs to rustle up electronic acronyms for flatter cornering, Mazda realises such physical messages make a dinky sports car like this fun and involving at sane speeds and in the hands of those not equipped with qymkhana-like reactions.

The 2.0, though, will be the better car for those who are. It doesn't feel hugely different to the 1.5 in a lot of circumstances, but it exhibits bigger lungs under sustained acceleration and opens up more options when cornering, having greater influence over your angle of attack.

Like its littler sibling, the four-cylinder engine sounds rorty if a bit workmanlike,

VERDICT

How to have fun at sane speeds and prices. MX-5 feels sharper than ever.

9/10

but with Mazda continuing to shun turbocharging – a good thing – it still works best given a jolly good pasting, the big central rev-counter sat slap bang in the driver's vision.

And it's wonderfully uncomplicated details like this that mean the MX-5 is sweeter than it's ever been. The manual 'box is superb and should have no one wishing for paddles, while there are no befuddling driving modes to toggle through. The lightweight manual roof flips back in two seconds with one arm movement.

Should you stump up the extra for the 2.0? If you want your MX-5 for actual pacy driving, we'd say yes. But the difference isn't big enough to shame the still excellent 1.5 if you're short on cash or simply not fussed about the nth degree of cornering precision.

The moral of the story? You can't really buy a bad MX-5...





onsensical name notwithstanding, the Kadjar is an important car for Renault. It's the brand's first crack at a biggish

crossover since 2008's notably terrible Koleos, which was so unpopular with Brits it was canned after just a couple of years on sale. And as we know, though the crossover is a relatively recent phenomenon, they haven't half caught on in these parts.

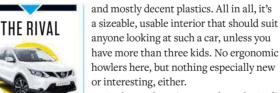
Then there's where it's going to be built. European Kadjars will be built in Spain, but in 2016 Kadjar production will be expanded to include the brand's new factory in China - thanks to an agreement with Dongfeng.

And Renault has gone about the Kadjar in the right way. It's built on the same Renault-Nissan Alliance CMF (Common Module Family) platform that underpins the Qashqai and X-Trail. The engines are familiar, too. There's a 1.2-litre turbo four with 128bhp, a 1.5-litre diesel with 109bhp - which is the one we Brits will buy - and the 1.6-litre, 128bhp diesel driven here. Opt for the fruitier diesel, and you can spec a 4WD system that reroutes up to half the power rearwards if it detects a bit of slip.

It's the same, standard crossover stuff on the inside, too. There's room enough for







It almost doesn't matter how the Kadjar drives. There's not much fun to be had by throwing it at a roundabout a little too quickly. It is comfortable, though. And quiet, whether you go for one of the diesels or the petrol, which feels a bit out of its depth whenever you venture out of town. Best stick with the diesels. The 1.6 is quick enough, much more tractable and far more economical than the petrol. Renault claims the 1.5 will do 74.2mpg, and the 1.6-litre we drove, 58.8. That's not bad.

And that's the thing. It's not bad. At least, not measurably worse than the Qashqai in any one sense. It's a bit cheaper spec for spec, and maybe the Nissan is a little nicer to drive, but making a decision between the two ultimately comes down to which one you'd rather be seen in. I'd go Nissan, but you can bet a bundle will go Renault. It's a job done well.

So, what else is new?



Seat Ibiza

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW?

Little has changed on the outside, so the now seven-year-old Ibiza doesn't look as fresh as rivals. Beneath the skin, though, there are new petrol engines – including 1.0-litre turbo triples and a 148bhp 1.4 – and a new smartphone link-up, including Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and MirrorLink.

SHOULD I CARE?
If you favour value and tech over handling prowess, yes. A Fiesta is more fun to drive but its dated connectivity caves to the Ibiza's swish set-up, which could swing it for the yoof. In nicely mid-range 94bhp 1.0 SE spec, it's £920 cheaper than the equivalent Ford, too





BMW 640d

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW?

It's been handed a new pair of bumpers, spangly LED headlights and some new interior trim. Meanwhile, the familiar (and excellent) 309bhp twin-turbo diesel six is a pinch greener.

SHOULD I CARE?

If you weren't into the 6 before BM gave it a mid-life spruce, odds are you won't like it much now, either. That's not to say it's bad. For sustained, highspeed cruising, it really is mighty effective. But the ride is patchy and if you chuck it around it immediately feels less at home. We'd go for the Gran Coupe. Works better as a four-door.





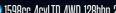
Mercedes-Benz Vito Tourer

Yes, it's a Van With Windows, but it's a very large, very nice Van With Windows. The Vito Tourer is the passenger edition of Merc's mid-sized panel van, with seating for no fewer than eight. Chronic overbreeders, head this way.

SHOULD I CARE?

The Vito Tourer isn't quite so luxurious as the V-Class with which it shares a platform: that limo-van starts at over £40k, whereas this Vito begins under £30k. Even so, it's a smartly appointed thing by van standards, with enough Merc touches to raise it above the standards of baser minibuses. Opt for one of the bigger diesels and it's a tidy enough drive, too.









NISSAN QASHQAI

A bit more money, a

little less style. Just

as silly a name

VERDICT









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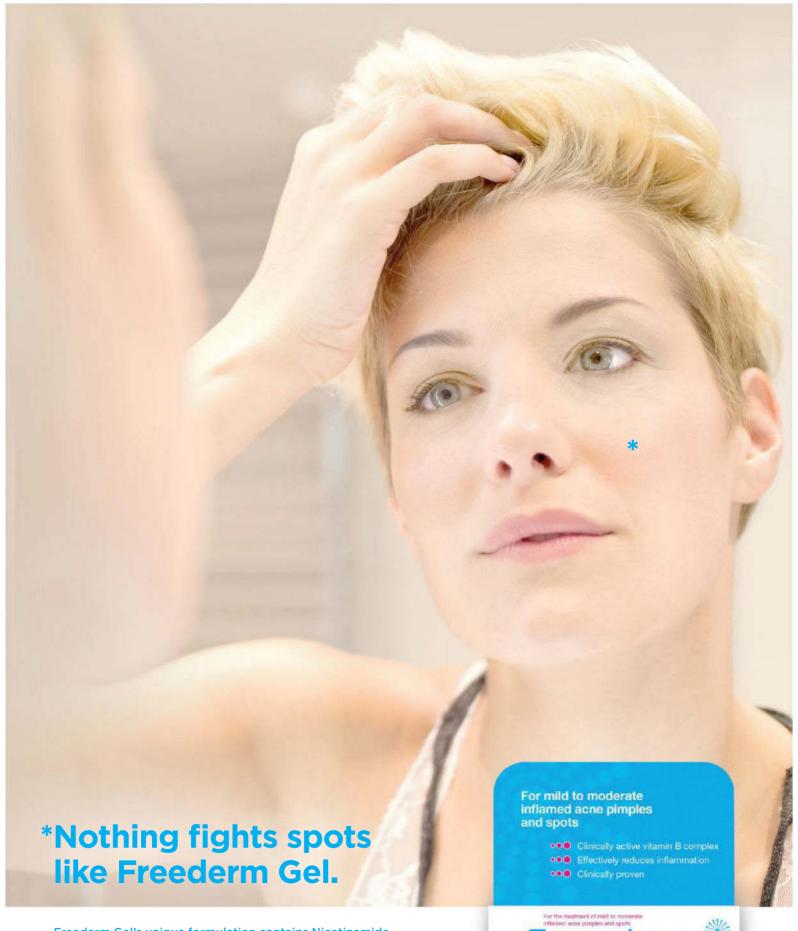


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t's easy to pigeonhole this new Hyundai Tucson. It's a compact SUV that has the Nissan Qashqai in its sights, just like the ix35

before it, but the resurrection of the original name signals Hyundai's desire to align its new crossover with the Santa Fe in buyers' minds. The sharp design takes its cue from the full-sized SUV, and parked side by side they look remarkably similar, making the old ix35 instantly old-fashioned.

Built on an all-new platform, the Tucson is a little bigger where it matters than the ix35, so there's appreciably more space inside the cabin, beating the Qashqai for rear accommodation and bootspace. The split-folding rear seats fold flat at a pull of a lever and the boot has split levels. Access to it is via a wide tailgate – electrically operated on the top-spec version. Up front is a new dashboard that looks contemporary, and there's loads of squidgy, soft-touch plastics and well-damped switchgear to raise the









NISSAN QASHQAI Yes, the Qashqai again. Well, it is the





Spacious and stylish addition to the growing ranks of schoolrun specials.

8/10

ambience. Most versions of the Tucson sold in the UK will come with an easy-to-use 8in touchscreen satnay system.

This new TomTom-developed unit is standard from SE Nav up (starting at £21,295, while Tucson pricing starts at £18,695) and is expected to be the most popular trim level, paired with the 114bhp 1.7-litre CRDi diesel engine we're already familiar with and front-wheel drive. A new turbocharged 1.6-litre petrol unit will be offered with a healthy 174bhp, and for caravanists and lifestylers who need to tow things there's the 182bhp 2.0-litre diesel as tested here, with four-wheel drive.

All power is sent to the front wheels until a computer reckons the rear axle needs to pull its weight, or the driver can lock the split at 50/50 at up to 25mph to help get them out of that muddy field they thought they could plough through because they're in an SUV. Back on terra

firma, the Tucson is an accomplished all-rounder. Even on 19-inch wheels, the ride comfort is very good (though a quick drive in the petrol version revealed less composure, for some reason), and that's paired with a grown-up feel to the way the car controls unwanted body movements during more spirited driving.

The steering system stands out for the wrong reasons, though – it's pointless pressing Sport mode as it reduces assistance and adds a strangely artificial sensation to the wheel, while the Lane Keep Assist System is way too keen to lend a helping hand for our liking. Still, it can be switched off at the touch of a button and is useful on the motorway, where the Tucson is an adept coverer of long distances.

Factor all that in with Hyundai's excellent five-year warranty, and if your name were Mr N. Qashqai, you'd be looking over your shoulder anxiously right about now.



Т

he Skoda Superb has always been a very large car, so bolting a loadlugging boot onto the back of it can only make

things even more commodious within. Though we're on Superb MkIII now, this is only the second estate – and it's a brilliant machine.

For a start, it looks great. No matter what size wheels it's on, or what colour it's finished in, or which spec it wears, the Superb Estate is a lean and angular creation with more than a flattering hint of Audi Avant about it. The interior is enormous. Four tall adults would have no problem travelling in here, while the 660 to 1,950-litre boot is the very definition of cavernous. The fit and finish of everything is high, and all models are well-specified as standard, so there are no complaints on the aesthetic front.

This particular model is also a bit of a Q-car – it uses one of the more powerful







MERCEDES E-CLASS ESTATE

Identically as spacious. Nearly as Superb. More money





VERDICT

The Superb Estate has always been massive; now it's gorgeous and quick too.

9/10

iterations of the EA888 2.0-litre turbocharged engine. The range-topping 2.0 TSI develops 276bhp and backs that up with a useful 258lb ft of torque, the latter available from 1,700rpm to 5,600rpm. This prodigious muscle is sent via a six-speed DSG dual-clutch automatic transmission to all four wheels.

It results in some startling on-paper stats for a Skoda that weighs 1,635kg and, more importantly, one that is not badged or styled to look any different from the rest of the range. The zero to 62mph sprint is blasted through in just 5.8 seconds, and the big wagon will eventually run on to 155mph.

It feels every bit as fast as those numbers suggest, but it's not the most sparkling machine in terms of dynamics. The steering is clean and precise, but not necessarily communicative, the DSG transmission is fine without being razor-

sharp, and the chassis is ultimately safe rather than playful and entertaining.

Not that this matters, though, because the car majors on refinement. Body control is impressive and the ride is sublime at all times. Wind, tyre and engine noise are kept to the barest minimum; comfortable cruising is the Superb's forte.

The 2.0 TSI is only available in the upper two trims of the Skoda Superb Estate range (SE L Executive or Laurin & Klement). This means it will cost either £32,320 or £35,940, making it the most expensive car in the range. But, if that's a major problem, you could always think of it as a cut-price Audi S4 Avant. Or you could pick from one of the other Superb Estates in a line-up that starts at a very fair £19,840 – because there's no doubt that this big Skoda wagon is absolutely superb. Yes, we went there.

SPECS 🔪 🥌 1984cc 4cyl turbo, 4WD, 276bhp, 258lb ft 🕟 39.2mpg, 168g/km CO, 😂 0–62mph in 5.8secs, 155mph 🚳 1635kg 🚯 £32,320

Q&A

Bentley Continental GT

Continental GT gets more power but not much else changes BY OLLIE MARRIAGE

OK, I get it, spot the difference right?

Indeed. This is a visual nip/tuck for the Conti GT that starts at the front bumper and finishes at the rear spoiler and does, well, not that much in between. There are new B-for-Bentley vents on the front flanks, three new colours, more leather choices, knurled gearlever paddles, on-board Wi-Fi is standard, there are new dial typefaces and a reshaped steering wheel.

What about more power?

Oh yes, a bit of that too, but you're not going to feel a gain of 15bhp when the W12 was already developing 567 of the suckers. That's a 2.6 per cent power hike. Whoop. That's the only one that's been modded – the range still starts with the 500bhp V8, passing up through the 521bhp V8 S and W12 to W12 Speed with 626bhp. More interestingly, the W12 joins the V8 in having a cylinder shut-off system. No mean feat, you'd imagine, given that it has four banks of cylinders...

Fuel economy shot up has it?

Not exactly – up from 19.5mpg to 20.1mpg, but due to the W12's immense torque, it's apparently quite content running as a 3.0-litre V6 so real-world gains are more significant. When I've driven Contis before they've always returned 15.0–16.0mpg, but this one was reading 18.4.

Does the Conti feel different now?

Not really, but it does look a bit sharper (although those low front scoops are reminiscent of an Audi RS). The W12 wafts effortlessly about the place, but if you like driving, the V8 S is the one to have.



It manages its weight better than the W12 and does a passable impression of sportiness. The body control is exceptional for something weighing over 2.3 tonnes, and it sounds properly good, too.

Why has so little been done in the facelift?

Because it didn't need to be done. The GT is Bentley's Porsche 911, the car that defines the brand to such an extent it can't afford to tamper with it too much. Plus, it's so well targeted at its audience, the only obvious 'improvement' would be to add hybrid tech to boost the smoothness/torque appeal. Last





VERDICT

OK, the facelift may be minor, but the Continental GT still defines the entire luxury GT class.

8/10

year, the then CEO, Wolfgang Schreiber, said that by the end of this decade 90 per cent of Bentleys would be available with hybrid tech. Provided that assumption still holds true, I'm going to assume that the reason this facelift is so minor is that Bentley is busy preparing something much more dramatic.

SPECS

- 🗢 5998cc W12, AWD, 582bhp, 531lb ft
- 20.1mpg, 327g/km CO₂
- 🍣 0-62mph in 4.3secs, 198mph
- 2320kg
- **150,500**





Toyota Avensis

The old Avensis wasn't very interesting. This is the new Avensis. And... it isn't very interesting. Sorry.

Not that Toyota hasn't tried. The front end now comes with added pointiness, the interior's had a rehash and there are a couple of new BMW diesels.

Ours was a 2.0-litre, with 141bhp and a 6spd manual 'box – quiet, fairly refined, frugal and easy to manage. However, all 236lb ft arrives at 1,750rpm, and by the time you hit 2,250rpm, it's fizzled out to nothingness. And then you have to change gear. Again

BY TOM HARRISON

Meanwhile, the suspension gurus have had a play with the spring rates and anti-roll bars. It still lacks the dynamism of a Mondeo, though. It won't offend you, but doesn't excite, either. For a car designed to sit at 70mph for days on end, it's not as comfy as we'd like – the lack of adjustment in the steering wheel and pedal set makes for achy shins, and the ride's nervous at times.

Improved? Yes. Enough? We wouldn't judge if you bought one – it'll go on for hundreds of thousands of miles, after all – but we'd look elsewhere.

ECS 🥏 1995cc, 4cyl TD, FWD, 141bhp, 2361b ft 🕟 64.2mpg, 119g/km CO, 🍣 0–62mph in 9.5secs, 124mph 🚳 1580kg 🕑 £22,995



his car has a turbo. It says as much on the back, which reads 'i30 Turbo'. Nearly every car these days has a turbo, which makes the specific mention of this one

Something Important. It means we are looking at a Hyundai hot hatch.

Well, lukewarm hatch, anyway. This Turbo is the new range-topper in the i30 line-up, here featuring a boosted version of Hyundai's 1.6-litre four-cylinder 'Gamma' petrol engine. Boost is good.

And the premise is set up nicely; there's a handy 28 per cent hike in power, 38 per cent more torque, stiffer, 'sports-tuned' suspension, a more direct steering set-up, bigger, 300mm vented brake discs up front and 284mm solid discs at the back.

About that suspension. Hyundai has - whisper it - honed the new i30 Turbo on an infamous stretch of road called the 'Nürburgring'. Yep, this little hatchback with a five-year warranty and honest demeanour was subjected to 110 laps of the 'Ring every week, over the course of a four to six week development period. Imagine all the Rocky training montages, all at the same time. Ouchy.

You'd imagine it to be fast and pointy,









VERDICT

Honestly, it's a good car, but needs more. More power, more feel.

there's a turbocharger on board, the engine produces just 183bhp, which means a 0-62mph time of eight seconds flat. Not exactly hair-raising.

In the real world, of course, 183bhp is plenty for any rational human being. It feels punchy, though, and fast enough for most. Same goes with the handling. It will certainly go around corners, many of them with much haste, while body control is also good. It rides nicely too, if a little fussily.

However, we'd prefer more feel from the steering. It's accurate, sure - as in, it goes where you generally point it - but there's not much feel, despite a three-stage steering set-up (Comfort, Normal, Sport). And the engine needs a better, more refined note. It's a little too droney.

And you cannot overlook the similarly priced Ford Focus ST - the major fly in Hyundai's soup. The Ford is much more powerful, much quicker and easily trumps the 30 for driver appeal.

So it's a solid effort from Hyundai and one that wouldn't need much work to make it much, much hotter - but we wanted more from that badge. Shame.

TG'S ONE MINUTE EXPERT

Got 60 seconds spare? Read these



MINI 210 CHALLENGE

 Basically a Cooper S with an extra 18bhp from its 2.0-litre turbo petrol, the Challenge is apparently inspired by Mini's one-make race series. Just 210 will be built.

• Yes, the exhaust is a bit louder. But not THAT loud. We used it on the road and aren't writing this from prison. It does sound tasty.

Most novel is the Challenge's fruitier exhaust, with a (switchable) mode SO NOISY YOU CAN'T LEGALLY USEITON THE ROAD.

 However. The Challenge costs a meaty 30 grand. The 228bhp Mini JCW starts just over £23,000. £7k buys you a lot of aftermarket exhaust. Discuss.

Engine 1998cc, 4cyl, FWD, 207bhp, 221lb ft Performance 52.3mpg, 125g/km CO₂, 0-62mph in 6.1secs, 153mph Weight 1235kg Price £29,990



BMW 116d ED PLUS

 For maximum eco, BMW has junked its diesel four and fitted the 116d ED Plus with the little three-cylinder turbo from the Mini D. Result? 83.1mpg and 89g/km

 Drives like a 1-Series, which is fine by us. Bit clattery through first and second, but beyond that, smooth, quiet and willing enough to rev.

• Manual sixspeeder is the only'box offered. Long, springy throw is offset by easy clutch and auto revmatch, which helps keep things smooth.

•£300 more buys you a 118d, which is two whole seconds quicker to 62mph and in the real world, probably just as economical. Not road tax exempt, however...

Engine 1496cc, 3cyl, RWD, 114bhp, 199lb ft Performance 83.1mpg, 89g/km CO₂, 0-62mph in 10.4 secs, 121 mph Weight 1395 kg Price £22,560

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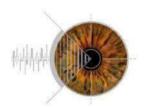




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SsangYong Tivolivs Suzuki Vitara

Crossovers are booming, but which bargain option is best? BY OLLIE KEW



South Korea's lesser-known carmaker would kill for a slice of such success. SsangYong is on the right track by entering the booming crossover market, with the entry-level Tivoli offering seven airbags, cruise control and a five-year warranty for sub-£13k. This mid-range EX model is £14,600.

EVOQUES FOR 50% OFF?

The Vitara beats the S-Y on pedigree – it's been a UK stalwart since the late Eighties. This one's the least agricultural yet, as Suzuki cottons on to the lust for rufty-tufty hatches. We're driving a topspec SZ5, which costs just under £20k. Less eyecatching (and polarising) than the Tivoli, no?

Cor, a chunky flat-bottomed wheel! And there's more. The materials aren't horrid, there's useful seating adjustment and it all feels nicely screwed down. The tall, Hyundai-style dash layout is pleasing, but beware the petulant touchscreen.

ARE THEY TINNY INSIDE?

Perhaps this car's childish, coloured dash didn't help, but the pricier Vitara's perceived quality is low. Too many random finishes, cheap-feeling vents and a flimsy lightness to controls and the crucial door-slam test. Lacks showroom spark.

It's about neck and neck between the Tivoli and Vitara for occupant space, with the SsangYong perhaps just edging rear legroom, but losing on visibility. On paper, the Korean's 423-litre boot trumps the Vitara's 375-litre effort, but the Tivoli's higher load lip and shallower shape is less useful.

WHICH IS **BEST FOR FAMILIES?** Uninviting it may be, but the Vitara's Subaru-like utilitarianism has its boons. This 4x4 version will tow 1,600kg (the AWD Tivoli pulls 100kg less), yet it's cheaper to fuel, tax and insure. And for transporting your dearest, the Vitara's five-star NCAP rating is gold dust. Tivoli? Not tested...



Here's where SsangYong's lack of experience in this sector tells. There's an unnerving mishmash between the pedal weights, reminding you what it was like to have L-plates. And progress is further limited by the asthmatic engine's lethargy. Pity.

ANY GOOD TO DRIVE?

The Suzuki also struggles with a strained motor, but counters with a slicker, VW Up-like gearshift, more considered low-speed ride and superior cabin insulation. Little things, but they add up to an easier drive than the Tivoli.





VERDICT

FOR Looks zany, very spacious and the cabin is properly sorted. At £13k basic, it's very reasonably priced AGAINST Schizophrenic controls and overworked engine need polishing. **VERDICT** Fit for purpose. If Lidl made cars...



FOR Suzuki is ace at honest, cheap cars. This is fundamentally a good egg. Comfy, too. AGAINST Gutless engine and crass cabin betray the penny-saving. ERDICT Hardly dear, and worth it for the sweeter drive.

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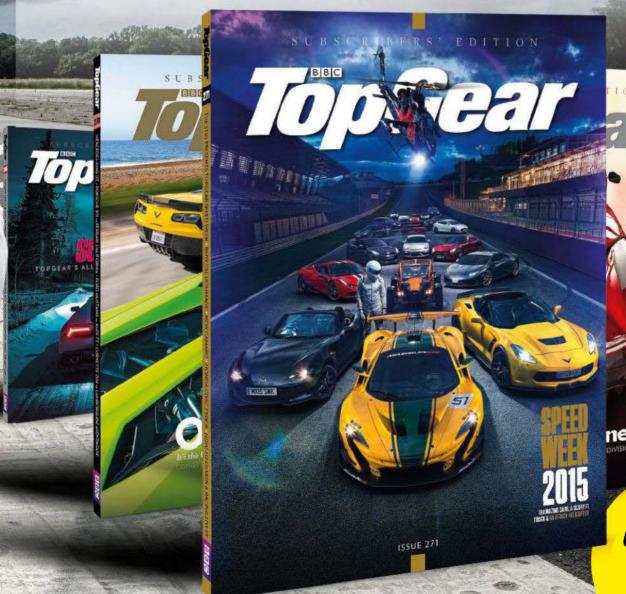
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Is the GT3 RS so track-focused you can't use it on the road? Only one way to find out. Go for a drive. A long one

WORDS: OLLIE MARRIAGE /
PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD PARDON





A

s I write this, the GT3 RS is parked outside my window. I'm finding it a struggle to remain indoors. It's a lovely warm day, I could just take off, go and get another hit.

It's not long since my last. his morning, having driven 700

I got home at 3am this morning, having driven 700 miles in two days all over north Wales. And all I want to do is drive some more.

It pains me mightily to admit it, but I misjudged the GT3 RS when I drove it on its launch in Germany and reviewed it on our website. "I can't help thinking it's a bit of a shame you have to be going so fast to get your kicks," I wrote. Wrong. It felt like that in Germany because on smooth roads the car never seemed to have to work anything like as hard as the driver, and on track... well, as you can read on page 97, that was a different matter.

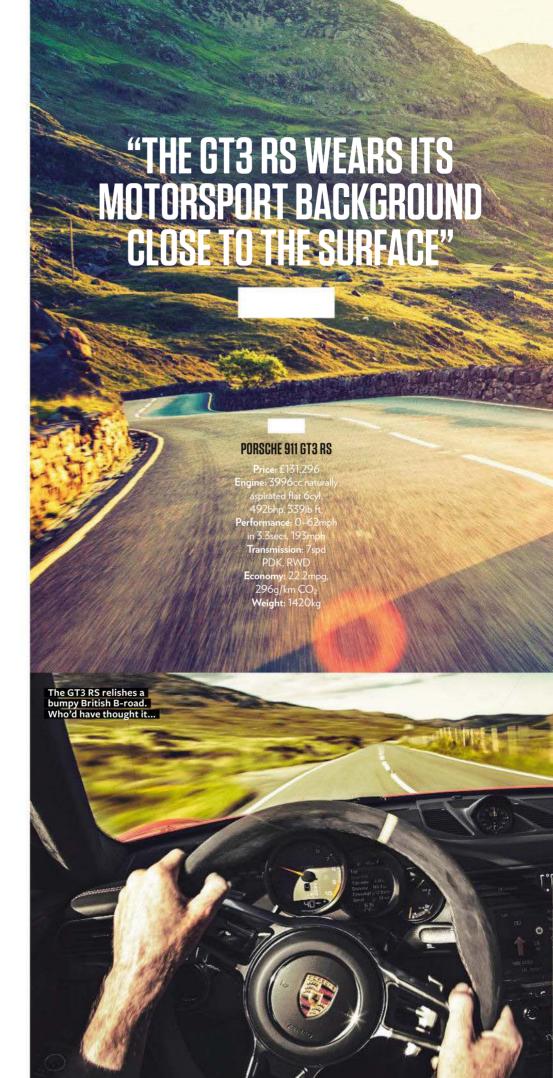
Now I'm in Wales, on the same roads I took the standard GT3 to almost exactly two years ago. Partly to play spot the difference, partly because the roads around Bala are just spectacular.

I got here in the same way, too – via the tangle of roadworks, congestion and identi-awful services that is Britain's motorway network. The new GT3 RS is only available, like the GT3, with a PDK gearbox. It goes a long way to convincing you that you could live with the GT3 RS as an everyday car.

Just because you could doesn't mean you should, though. You'd eventually become irritated by it, and that would be a shame. Your spine would hunch into the seats, you'd never hear Chris Evans over the white noise of road roar and you'd flinch at every cat's eye. Constricted, deaf and numbed, you'd suffer a slow slide into masochism and lose sight of why this car is so great. So don't do it to yourself.

And besides, who on the M42 is going to admire the carbon bonnet, boot and rear wing? The plastic windows, sticker-for-a-badge and magnesium roof panel (30 per cent lighter than aluminium)? No one, that's who. It's tempting to view all this as unnecessary sparkle, designed to sucker in the geeky and fetishistic. If Porsche had stuck with a conventional aluminium roof, the car would have weighed 1,421.1kg instead of 1,420kg. And yet they persevered with this world first, a component that's 1mm thick, made from magnesium sourced in Malaysia, shaped in Canada and finally fitted in Germany. All for a single saved kilo.

But as I'm sure you're aware, every little helps. And lots of little eventually adds up to something big. Porsche has put the same attention to detail into *everything*. It's highly unlikely you'll ever see the titanium con rods or the crankshaft, made of the same V361 super-high-purity steel as the 919 Le Mans car's, that had to be remelted multiple times in order to achieve the strength and grain it needs. But they're there. Likewise the dry-sump lubricated engine that now has a 4mm longer stroke,









taking the 3.8-litre engine out to 4.0 litres, gaining 25bhp and 15lb ft. And the ball-jointed suspension. And the (admittedly optional) lightweight lithiumion battery. And the titanium exhaust.

What you can see is the car itself. Oof.

Where does Cup car end and road car start? How are those rear wheelarch clearances legal? It doesn't look self-conscious or visually overblown (no parody of a racing stripe here), it just looks *mighty*. It looks, to be frank, like the components are too big for the bodyshell. Those wheels pop out of the arches, you could host a state banquet on the rear wing, even the headlights seem more pronounced, artificially enhanced by the newly sculpted bonnet and roof. For two days solid, photographer Richard Pardon and I can't stop staring at it. There's not a bad angle on it.

The GT3 RS wears its motorsport background so close to the surface that occasionally it bursts through. It's the first of Porsche's naturally aspirated GT cars to use the wider Turbo body, which brings wider track widths (good for grip) and side air

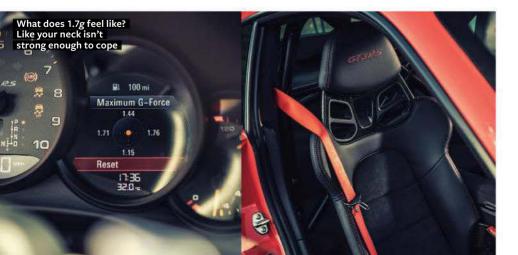
intakes (the ram-air effect is good for power). The broader bodyshell can't help but add weight, yet thanks to all those marginal gains, it's 10kg lighter than the GT3.

And much more aerodynamically effective. Those slats above the front wheels vent high-pressure air from the wheelarches, allowing the front spoiler to do its job more effectively, generating 110kg of downforce at 125mph. In turn, this meant the engineers could fit a bigger rear wing to balance things out. Excellent. Another 220kg of downforce.









In total, the GT3 RS generates 80 per cent of the downforce of the Cup racing car. Still not enough grip? Those vast 21-inch rear wheels are wrapped in comical 325/30 Michelin Pilot Super Sport tyres and, to top it all, don't forget the flat-six hangs out the back, too.

Grip, frankly, is ludicrous. There's an on-board g-meter. We took a picture of it. Have a look at the readings. Traction is equally daft. You can come out of a hairpin in first gear, give it everything, and you still won't unstick the rears. I know, I tried. Repeatedly. In fact, the only way to do the sideways stuff is to indulge a secret Porsche PDK trick. Pull both paddles and you get neutral, give it a dose of gas, release the paddles which dumps the clutch, the tyres unhook, and the noise and drama begins. Porsche isn't quite so overt about what the paddle-neutral function is for. The line in the bumf says it is possible "to influence driving dynamics by a rapid onset of propulsive power when engaging the clutch... the rear of the car can be intentionally destabilised for dynamic turn-in behaviour when cornering". Hmm, Porsche needs to learn when to call a spade a spade. Precis: it's a shortcut to hero mode.

Skids and burnouts aren't really a key facet of the RS's repertoire. This is not a muscle car, it's a precision instrument. It will do the silly stuff, and it'll do it with utter focus, but to really understand the GT3 RS, all you need to do is drive. And keep driving. Then drive some more. Because driving is what the GT3 RS does beautifully. This is not a Lamborghini-esque piece of street theatre, it doesn't have the drama of the Ferrari 488 GTB or the ride comfort of a McLaren 650S. It has no fallback position.

It doesn't need one. Where the standard GT3 is surprisingly magnanimous, the GT3 RS is ruthless. Don't worry – it's on your side, but its take-no-prisoners attitude to roads is something to experience. It's not feral, because that implies something wild and out of control. No, this is something implacable, hinting at contained violence, but never hot-headed. It's the Terminator of roads. Lousy film reference, but you get the idea.

This makes it sound rather cold, but it's not. The way it goes down the B4391, one of my top five roads ever, is deliciously, intensely involving. I was worried from that first drive in Germany that the minimal suspension travel would make it brittle and snatchy over here – and it does skip under power occasionally as it fights the runkled surface for available grip. But you soon realise that, far from being frightening, this is a mark of how much information is coming back at you.

I've done Bala, and now I need more. Roads, scenery, driving – I can't help myself, I don't want to stop. So I'm off further north making my own compilation of Wales's greatest hits. It's mesmeric on smooth, wide A-roads such as the A470, struggles slightly on the small stuff due to width rather than body composure. It's a very wide car. But I like it best on a two-lane B-road. Enough room to play with, but with plenty to keep you occupied. And still the GT3 RS goes exactly where I point it.











Speed of attack is almost irrelevant. It doesn't understeer, it just turns. Personally, there's a part of me that misses the bobble and sniff of old 911s, the way the nose searched out cambers and ruts. Partnered with that was gorgeous steering feel, but also a hint of fear that all might not be well, that the grip might run out. The longer wheelbase has shifted the weight distribution, so the rear end no longer acts like such a lever for the front, plus there's fourwheel steering and dynamic engine mounts and downforce, all of which has helped make the front end ultra-positive and reassuring. It hasn't helped natural steering feel, but in this instance, with zero slack anywhere in the chassis, you get more information that you can possibly process.

And information is the RS's secret. As a result, I resolve to give myself information overload by driving everywhere with the dampers hardened up. It's strangely addictive and not nearly as masochistic as I feared. Because this car is about driving, you don't worry about anything else. As a result, I've no idea what the sound system is like, nor did I bother with the new Pit Speed function. This, not the wide boy Turbo S, is the ultimate 911. It compels you to concentrate, to just press pedals and turn steering. And the reactions you get from the controls are so instant, so perfectly tuned into your movements that you and the car flow together, accelerating, braking, turning. And repeating. Ideally ad infinitum. Or until the petrol runs out.

You find yourself celebrating the skips and bumps, because nothing appears to be able to throw this car off line. You relish the ruthless attitude, as you're so absorbed in the driving. And you don't have to be a great driver to enjoy it, you just have to give yourself over to the car. It feels bombproof, both in its abilities and its mechanical robustness, a hunkered-down gutsiness underpins the whole car. And the cabin. It might have a lot of equipment, but I can't think of a better driving environment.



I can't stop driving. We're way beyond Bala now, homing in on the Llanberis Pass, the sheersided heart of Snowdonia. The sun is setting and the mighty flat-six is chuntering and yelping and howling and soaring: 8,800rpm, that'll do. It's tight as a drum, yet bursting with energy and rips through the rev band like a whip crack. And the soundtrack, as it echoes off the slate and rock, is spectacular. Natural aspiration. There's simply nothing to beat it. Why would you need to go faster? Honestly, the speeds this car could ratchet up are insane.

I'm becoming addicted. Up and down the Llanberis Pass I drive, while a drone flies above me and shutters click in the hillsides. Just one more pass? Oh, go on then. This is a difficult, treacherous road, lined on one side with vicious slabs of hewn rock and on the other with the roots of the mountains themselves. The RS snarls along here, never puts a foot wrong. It hasn't in two days.

I was worried the GT3 RS had become so capable that at road speeds it would seem bored, grumpily insistent that it had to be taken to a track to give its best. Instead it's mesmerising. Time to drive some more. 176



The GT3 RS finds another dimension when you take it on a track – the rollercoaster ride that is Bilster Berg in Germany, in this instance. Here, you get to find out what happens when the grip runs out, discover just how adjustable it is at the limit. You have to be confident in it; you can't show the RS any weakness because if you do, if you back out of the throttle mid-corner, it'll start to edge out at the back, punish your indecision with a 'slow' exit and your heart in your mouth.

So instead man up, trust that amazing front end, stay on the throttle, relish the grip and you'll come out the far side fully lit and giddy with excitement. It's a compelling car, it really is. And once you get used to it, you can play with the balance through corners, tickle the throttle to adjust your line, maybe even indulge in a spot of left-foot braking. Why not? It's not like you've got a clutch to worry about.

Is PDK a good thing in Porsche's most driverfocused car? In this instance, yes. The car is so fast in every other aspect that to have a slow gearbox would be anathema. And it is a brilliant double-clutcher, a proper companion for the epic engine.

As you might have gathered, the GT3 RS is not an easy-going car, not laugh-a-minute fun. It's more serious, more intent than that. Nothing less than a driving weapon.

Alpine, beloved by Frenchies and rallying geeks, is back. And this Celebration concept shows it wants a slice of the pie

WORDS: JASON BARLOW / PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEX HOWE

A

lpine's Antony Villain is the latest car designer to accept *TopGear*'s sketch challenge. It's not quite *The Great British Bake Off*, but it's still illuminating. The rules are simple: can you nail the basic form of a car in three lines?

Villain's task is made trickier because we're talking in the paddock during the Goodwood

Festival of Speed. BJ Baldwin's Chevy Silverado monster truck has just arrived behind us, star of a gazillion YouTube views and the throbbing, thunderous antithesis of Alpine's elegant and elfin Celebration concept car.

Actually, it sort of sums up the scale of Alpine's challenge, as it tries to gain traction in a very noisy world. The brand is here in force at FoS, fielding a handful of cars from its 60-year history, including 1978's outright Le Mans winner, the A442b. Problem is, unless you're French and/or of a certain age and geeky inclination, you probably don't know much about Alpine. Is it Renault's performance subbrand? A Gallic Lotus? And what happened to that partnership with Caterham? More worryingly, does anybody really care?

Well, we should. As Villain's pencil skates across my notepad, it's clear that the Celebration – first revealed at Le Mans last month – is a thinly disguised production car. Renault will use the real thing to relaunch the Alpine brand in about 18 months' time, and it will be

light, compact, and mid-engined. Think Porsche Cayman or Alfa Romeo 4C – punchy, accessible, shrunken supercars.

Villain, who works closely with Renault's design boss Laurens van den Acker, is core to the team that has relocated the company's aesthetic mojo, and there's obviously a ton of motorsport expertise in the wider Renault firmament. This bodes well. Happily, the Celebration concept is one of those cars that looks and feels instantly fresh in the flesh, and channels the spirit of the Sixties A110 without being obviously retro. Still, after 20 years MIA, there's clearly a lot of work to be done.

"Alpine is probably best known for its rallying exploits, and then Le Mans after that," Villain says. "I have a clear image in my mind of a really light, agile car drifting in the Monte Carlo rally. French people of a certain age definitely remember Alpine. The younger generation and people outside France, well, we know we have a job to do reminding them about who we are and what we stand for. Where Alpine is known, it is embraced with great passion and positivity."

True enough. A general lack of awareness certainly hasn't hampered Alpine's cult status, and the brand's roots tick all the right boxes. Dieppebased Renault dealer and Alpine founder Jean Rédélé raced and rallied the 4CV to a class win at the 1952 Mille Miglia and almost managed a similar feat at Le Mans the same year. The Michelotti-designed 4CV Special Sport morphed into the first official Alpine, the Al06 – "The adjective [Alpine] epitomises the pleasure of driving on mountain roads," Rédélé claimed –



Celebration will probably start life with 2.0-litre turbo, tweaked up from 250bhp to 300bhp and mid-mounted. Debt to A110 is obvious but reboot is no lazy retread. Might end up racing



and the cars were innovative, robust and modestly powered but effective motorsport tools.

None more so than the A110; although it arrived in 1961, it was still sufficiently on the money to win the World Rally Championship in 1973 even after its none-more-Seventies A310 successor had rocked up as Renault came to the rescue (remember how many cars and companies the '73 energy crisis killed?) Alpine also contested Le Mans 11 times, that '78 victory the last as Renault focused on Formula One, and some newfangled technology called turbocharging. The road-car division petered out with the Esprit-alike A610 in 1995, although the Dieppe factory was kept busy building RenaultSport cars.

The reawakening was heralded by 2012's A110-50 show car, a piece of design eye candy no one was ever going to build a viable business case around. There was also a carbon-fibre-chassied Gran Turismo Vision GT earlier this year, powered by a mid-mounted, 450bhp V8, also about as realistic as an entire squadron of airborne pigs. We should also point out that the Signatech-Alpine A450b is currently competing in the WEC, and raced at Le Mans (DNF sadly). "It will showcase our ability in parts of the world that are important for our brand," Alpine's CEO Bernard Ollivier commented. "This programme will benefit Alpine's image across the globe."

Indeed. But the car you see here is what Monsieur Ollivier is banking on becoming the bottom-line-fattening unit-shifter, and the

"ALPINE IS PROBABLY BEST KNOWN FOR ITS RALLYING EXPLOITS"





campaign begins now. Like Nissan's fabulous 2013 IDx Tokyo show car, which reminded us how funky the Seventies Bluebird 510 was, by mining relatively obscure source material, the Alpine somehow manages to punch way above its weight. It delivers a warm blast of nostalgia while intriguing you with its left-fieldedness at the same time. (NB: the IDx, apparently confirmed for production, is now not happening after all. Boo.) As per the *TG* test, the car is easily, winningly assimilable: it has a strong face, a dropping line to the rear, hungry wheelarches and a clever roof treatment. Back to Villain for more insight.

"The A110-50 was a pure concept. With this car, we focused on the fundamentals," he says. "We are working step by step to bring the brand to production. We've kept it compact to reduce weight and to promote a really good power-to-weight ratio. It's a car that you can use every day, but it's also something playful."

Villain admits that the A110 is the most iconic Alpine, so began the reboot with the smaller auxiliary lights at the front. The new car's rear end doesn't taper away as dramatically as the original's, but the rear window is unusually proportioned. There's a good reason for this: one of the A110's quirks was that its back window was actually a windscreen purloined from another car. The white-coloured inset on the rear is a nod to the graphics of Sixties and Seventies racing cars (Villain mentions the Shelby Cobra

and Porsche 909). Although pictured here with its Goodwood graphic – intertwined Union Jack and French tricolour – the strip on the chunky C-pillar says it all. Villain laughs. "It's made in France, and we are very proud of that. But it's not aggressive or arrogant."

Bien sûr que non. It's small, the engine's in the right place, and you immediately want to take it for an improvisational razz along the sort of leafy roads that would give you the collywobbles behind the wheel of a LaFerrari or McLaren P1. No word yet on what the engine will be, but if, say, the 250bhp, 2.0-litre turbo unit from the Megane RenaultSport ended up in there, we'd be delighted. No true Alpine rallyist would choose a dual-clutch auto, but that's what's on the cards, and you can't always get what you want. Besides, if they keep the weight pegged to a rumoured 1,100kg, and can sort out the software glitches that blighted the Clio RS's paddle-shift, it could suit the car's character. The Caterham joint venture, dissolved in 2013 amid some frustration, will still imbue the Alpine with a minimalist character, although Villain insists that's integral to the brand anyway. As is a wider Gallic tendency to "disrupt".

"Challenging things is part of the French culture. We take risks, sometimes perhaps too big a risk, and it hasn't always worked out," Villain concedes. "Now we want to combine this attitude with a real consistency. We want to avoid the wavy up-and-down line, you know?"



"THE ALPINE DELIVERS A WARM BLAST OF NOSTALGIA"



ALPINE VIEW

CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN
OF AUTO EXCELLENCE



Won Le Mans in '78: 2.1-litre turbo V6 saw it hit 221mph



Arrived in '71, exited in '85, 11,500 sold. *Ésprit français*



Marked the end of the road for road-going Alpines, until now...







A new Ferrari has entered the stable. It has 661bhp,560lbft of torque and, shhh, a turbo...









The results are faintly menacing. The 488 GTB makes 661bhp and, perhaps even more significantly, 560lb ft of torque, all available from under 3,000rpm. It'll officially do 0–62mph in 3.0secs, and hit 124mph barely five seconds later. Surface-to-air missiles have boasted a shabbier set of vital statistics.

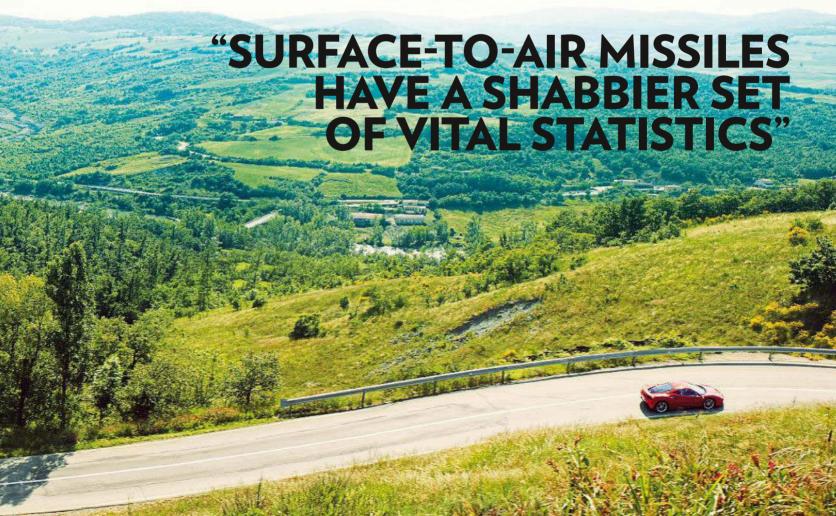
But supercars, of course, are about more than mere numbers. As Ferrari's chief engineer of Bleepy Warning Noises finally wrapped up the 488 presentation, we escaped into the Maranello hills to see how the new mohawk suited His Holiness.

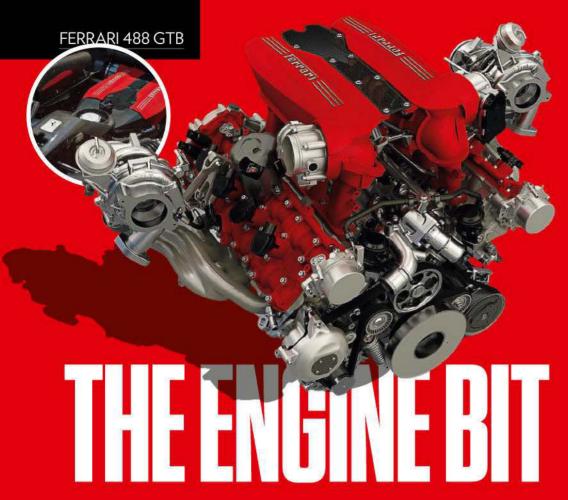
Sweet mother of Stig, the 488 is quick. The first time I find an empty bit of road and depress the throttle, it's apparent within, ooh, a couple of milliseconds that the 488's acceleration is a league beyond that of the 458, even beyond the Lambo Huracán, flinging you down the road with the shocking, brutal thrust of a fighter jet on take-off. It's the sort of acceleration that pins you deep in your seat, that causes a string of involuntary expletives to spew forth from your lips.

Approaching a tight right-hander, I glance down at the dash to check what gear I'm in. A couple of microseconds later, I return my eyes to the road and discover with interest that I am a) going 40mph quicker than expected, b) 100 metres closer to the apex than expected and c) have liberated an entire, long-forgotten subfolder of frenzied swearing from deep within my subconscious. This much is clear: if someone has an off in a 488, it's not going to be small.

The software of the 458's seven-speed dual-clutch 'box has been revised for faster shifts, adding to a surge of torque that is relentless, the power arriving in a continuous deluge with barely a blink between gears. So remorseless is the thrust that I kept battering into the 488's limiter, expecting the rush never to run out. The throttle response is all but instantaneous, the power linear, even and massive.

Fast, then, but does the 488's engine *feel* like a Ferrari V8? It doesn't feel like an old Ferrari V8, that's for sure. The turbo engine certainly doesn't gain and lose revs with the massless snap of the old naturally aspirated V8, which would drop from 8,000rpm to idle so quickly you wondered how the rev-counter needle could keep up. Despite Ferrari claiming the 488 boasts the fastest reactions of any turbo engine, there's no doubting the new V8 is just a mite less frenetic in its response than the 458. Not slow, mind, and addictive in its own way. It's a





The 488's 3.9-litre, flat-crank
V8 owes its block and cylinder
position to the engine from Ferrari's
California T, but is unique in almost
every regard beyond that. There's
a new dry-sump system – the Cali
is wet-sumped – along with
redesigned cylinder heads, new
cams, a new intake system, a new
crankshaft, specific intercoolers and
new pretty much everything else.

The twin-scroll turbos are cutting-edge, with turbine wheels

made of an aerospace-grade titanium alloy generating 50 per cent less friction than the standard Inconel turbines found in the Cali T. They're mounted on ball-bearing shafts, reducing friction by a further 30 per cent. The exhaust system is unique, too, a beautiful tangle of metalwork ensuring extended, even-length runners.

The result of all this modification is a modestly sized engine with a huge punch, the 488 making a heady

169bhp per litre of displacement. If the Dodge Viper's 8.0-litre V10 managed the same power density, it'd generate 1,355bhp.

The 488's powerplant is also, Ferrari says, the most responsive turbocharged performance engine. Plant the throttle, and maximum engine response – not the first jolt, but the full beans – arrives in 0.8 of a second, just a tenth of a second slower than the 458's whip crack, naturally aspirated V8.

CENEDATION		F430	F458	F488
ULM	GAME (
	0-62	3.7	3.4	3.0
	0-124	12.2	10.4	8.3
	MPG	18.6	21.2	24.8
	CO ₂	345	275	260
	BHP/LITRE	112	125	169

HOW SSC2 Makes you a Driving god



The 458 Speciale debuted Side Slip Control, which analysed lateral g, yaw and steering angles, before subtly adjusting rear e-diff and traction control to manage slip angles



Depending on driving mode, SSC could prevent you having a slippery back-to-front accident or, far better, actually hold you in what Ferrari described as "controlled oversteer"



The 488 gets Side Slip Control 2, which adds adaptive damping to the equation. Constantly monitoring the car's stance, it can soften or stiffen front or rear to help you hold a slide.



It works. Astonishingly well. SSC2's greatest trick is to make a 661bhp, RWD supercar seem manageable and exploitable without ever making its presence felt



From blown diffusers to vortex generators, how the 488 makes downforce without drag



different sort of power, this: broad-shouldered and all-consuming, an unstoppable wrecking ball of pure speed.

And what of the noise? Again, the 488 doesn't sound like an *old* Ferrari. Whereas, in that 458 Speciale, you felt you were stretching some sort of mad elastic band as the revs increased, the noise getting higher, tighter, more frenzied, the 488's soundtrack is more linear, controlled, compressed. It doesn't have the baritone-to-soprano range of the old nat-asp V8, trading the 458's vocal diversity for a heftier, chest-filling boom. Certainly it doesn't get all screaming and sparkly at the top end, just louder, angrier. It sounds not unlike a modern F1 car with its pit-lane limiter on, a bass-heavy, air-bullying thump overlaid with a medley of whooshes, cracks and mechanical edge. Interesting, for sure, but it doesn't have the fizz of that atmospheric V8.

But – as my nan always used to say – what you lose in the noise department, you gain in slip angle. The 458, especially the Speciale, was pretty tidy at the sideways stuff, but the 488 takes it to a whole new level. I'm not the sort of driver to jump in a 600bhp-plus, rear-drive supercar and start immediately drifting it on public roads (I know, what a *square*), but – with the on-wheel manettino dialled back to CT OFF – after just a few corners I was quickly achieving neat, controllable slides, hanging the 488's tail out before flicking back into line like a shabby, Cornish Ken Block.

I'd love to claim such immaculate oversteer was thanks to my innate talent. But, if I'm being honest, it was very much thanks to the utter genius of the second-gen Side Slip Control (SSC2) installed on the 488, which now adjusts not only the rear diff and electronics, but even the damping front and rear for even greater slip angles.

If you fear the increasing complexity of sports cars distracts from the driving experience, try this one before you consign all tech to the dustbin. SSC2 is no now-stop-that-right-now safety net, shutting down the power as soon as it spots a hint of slip. Quite the opposite: it all but encourages you to engage in gorgeous, steady slides, allowing you to get sideways and somehow, imperceptibly, holding you there.

In the aforementioned tech briefing, a Ferrari engineer showed us the equation used to calibrate SSC2. It covered an entire page of A4, and looked like something out of *The Theory of Everything*. Point is, there's some very clever stuff going on, but as a driver you have no sensation of the electronics doing their thing, simply that you've been transformed, overnight, into a Driving God. Sure, Ferrari could doubtless have mated this genius new system to a nat-asp V8, but the 488's ludicrous benevolence is thanks at least in part to SSC2 working hand in hand with the vast, level plateau of torque served up from the V8. It's not all bad news, this turbo lark.

So here it is, the £180,000 question: is the 488 GTB a better car than the 458 Italia? The easy answer is this: yes, it is. The 488 GTB costs the same as the 458, but offers a lot more power and speed for less fuel. Simple.

Unfortunately things are rarely simple when you're dealing with a topic as emotive as a shouty red lump of Italian exotica. So the more considered answer is: hmm. Now then. It boils down, I think, to what you want from your V8 supercar.

There's no denying the 488 doesn't have quite the tingling effervescence of the 458, doesn't goad you to the red line in quite the same way, doesn't sing so lustily when you get there. But it feels new, and different, and stonkingly fast. It sounds unique, and offers up a dizzying, crushing surge of torque. It'll turn you into an oversteering hero on road and track, and use a surprisingly modest amount of fuel while doing so. What's more important to the sort of person prepared to blow the best part of £200k on a fast car? No idea. Lend me £200k and I'll tell you.

So is the 488 a better car than the 458? Here's the honest answer. It doesn't matter. It's here, and the 458's gone. Whether you embrace the turbocharged, or pine lustily for the departing days of atmospheric sports cars, the shift *is* happening. Get used to it. The naturally aspirated era is at its end, but the 488 at least proves the new dawn won't be one of characterless vacuum cleaners. Welcome, one and all, to the Age of Turbo.







Imagine Lost in Translation with a few more bhp. But the appeal of small, fun city cars is very easy to understand...

WORDS: STEPHEN DOBIE / PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN WYCHERLEY







Miming and pointing can only get you so far. Japan is a country where English is infrequent, both in speech and writing. This, I had so far concluded, is wonderfully refreshing, enough to make even its capital city, Tokyo, feel fantastically alien.

But as I fold my (for once) lanky five-feet-nine-inch frame into the dinky Honda S660, I'm suddenly wishing for an English translator. The minimalist dashboard houses no satnay, see, and while I'm loath to rely on such things, it would offer more than a marginal helping hand in navigating a city that simply dwarfs London.

My gestures do nothing to acquire a plug-in device to sucker to the screen and keep John Wycherley and me aware of where the hell we are. It's time to do as our more sociable and adventurous pre-smartphone selves would have done a decade or two ago, then, and prod the S660's three-cylinder engine into life and burble into the city.

And perhaps aimless wandering is best, as we aim to explore the city that bred the diminutive car we're in, to shed some light on its unconventional form. The S660 confirms to Kei car regulations, you see. In brief, they allow no more than 63bhp from an engine 660cc or smaller, while the car must sit within a footprint smaller than a Renault Twingo's.

Yeah, we've got small cars and downsized engines in Europe. But the Kei – an abbreviation of *kei-jidōsha*, meaning light vehicle – was born way back in 1949, a response to post-war austerity. Tax levies, more space for parking and less congested traffic were the aims. We gained the Mini a little later, of course, but it was born of one man's vision rather than a wholesale movement. Nearly 40 years passed before we had another car remotely as focused, in the shape of the Smart.

Kei dimensions and engine allowances have grown over the years to their current point, reflecting both the car market and the growing size of the city that spawned them; the city we're in now. Most are sensible city cars, but there is also inventiveness, high points where Japan's carmakers have squeezed extra spicy ingredients into the Kei cookie cutter. The Honda Beat – a mid-engined, rear-drive roadster from the Nineties – is one such example, and this S660 is its modern successor.

Stress-free commuting may be its real reason for being, but with the twee, Elise-esque fabric roof rolled and stored under the front bonnet, the Honda feels like the perfect little pod to take in this eye-boggling city.

Our first stop is Hie Jinja, an irresistibly Japanese-looking shrine nestled cosily among glassy modern offices. As Wycherley gets to work, I get out of shot by taking a wander around. It becomes quickly apparent this is a highly spiritual place, with locals lining up to perform a meticulously choreographed ritual before Hie's altar, comprising bows, claps and bell-ringing.

Feeling ill-mannered for rocking up and parking a bright yellow roadster beside the *temizuya* water feature used for the hand cleansing that starts worship, I wander back to the car. Soon, my worries evaporate; a Rosso Corsa Ferrari FF has arrived, causing more fuss than we have.

It immediately gives some context to our shrunk-inthe-wash sports car. The S660 is simply dwarfed by the uncouth Italian, its unmistakably Japanese aesthetic looking right at home, and as we choose to make our escape, its engine, some 90 per cent down on power on the Ferrari's V12, makes a whole lot less fuss.

With just 830kg to shift, our turbo three-pot never feels underendowed, and it powers the rear wheels via













thing, like a two-thirds scale tribute to the new NSX. If a small car fits your needs, why wouldn't you have one that looks like this? And while it may simply be the fact I don't know the Japanese for "tosser", I'm sensing charm rather than animosity from the pedestrians walking past our quite probably illegally parked car. A Toyota Crown taxi wouldn't be cut this kind of slack.

Tight lanes are not the place to explore the outer reaches of its handling balance, of course, and with grip strong and power low, you'd need a damp go-kart track to make a drift machine of it. But it exhibits its lightness and minimal overhangs with instant and precise direction changes. And no city car I've driven has such a low-slung, body-hugging driving position. Honda has taken the Kei limitations and worked up to their borders, taken them as an invitation to experiment. You may need a car that's cheap to run, but that's no excuse for a lack of personality.

Aptly, an adorable Kei ice cream van now wants to squeeze past, so we make our exit, ducking and diving through Tokyo traffic for another couple of hours. We see day turn to night, the bright lights and boisterous sounds emanating from the city's busier boroughs taking on a new life away from natural light. Standing above it all is the 333m Tokyo Tower. Given we're 6,000 miles from home, it would be rude to pass up the opportunity to climb to its uppermost observation deck, 250m skyward.

A twilight view of Tokyo is breathtaking. It also presents a new perspective on how intricately packed this city is, the city which helped birth the effortlessly manoeuvrable Kei car. It's got to be the best way to

"I don't know the Japanese for 'tosser'"

explore Tokyo: Japan's irresistible oddness – and even a chapter of its post-war recovery – distilled into an unconventional 3.4 by 1.5 metre frame.

If you've no need for anything in the way of luggage space, this S660 would be a superb way to make innercity commuting less fraught, more fun. But there's a sucker punch: just like its fellow Kei cars, there are no plans for this little Honda, priced at the yen equivalent of £10,300, to be sold outside of Japan.

And after a day succumbing to the S660's sweetness, I'm struggling to see why – beyond their fragile proportions not yielding spiffing crash results – we're deprived of this motley crew of mini-cars. Europe likes its city cars strong and stylish, it would seem, and more than a little premium. But everything that's fashionable now – shrunken three-cylinder engines, a focus on cheap tax and a U-turn on swelling dimensions – has been evident in the Japanese market for more than six decades, with little stars like the S660 peppered across that timeline.

After a day of soaking up Tokyo's sights and sounds inside its cosy little cabin, I feel I must to encourage you to start knocking up the placards of protest now. Every city needs cars like this.





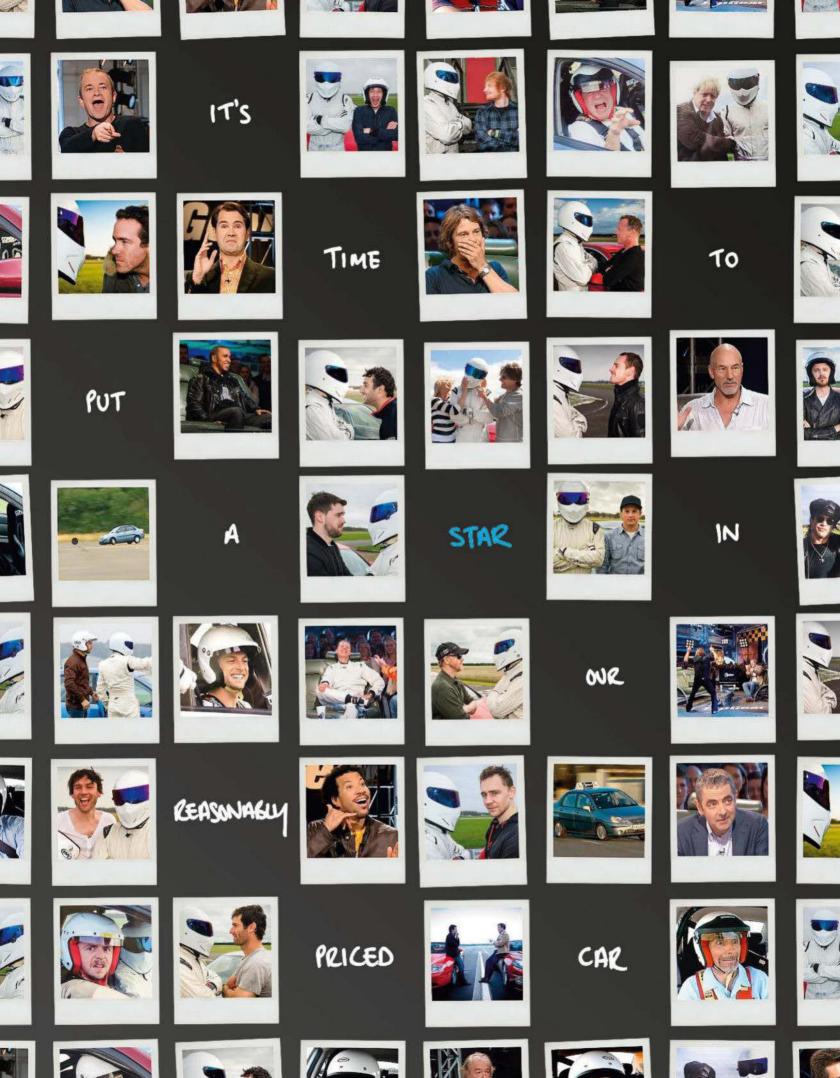












. PART THREE



WORDS: ANDY WILMAN

Like any TV show that decides to have a guest slot, the first thing you do is make a wish list of stars you want.

With our list back in 2002, the emphasis really was on the word "wish". We had Arnie, Tom Cruise, the whole of U2, Beckham, Paul McCartney, Cameron Diaz... basically anybody whose agent was going to say: "Really??!!"

And so it was that we found ourselves in the pub one evening – Jeremy, Richard, Jason and I – trying to find the number for the manager of the drummer from The Rubettes, when Harry Enfield walked past. Not three feet from us was an actual celebrity, more to the point an actual celebrity unprotected by the force field of his agent or publicity person, so we pounced. We descended on him like piranha fish in a local swimming bath, like 14-year-olds in a One Direction dressing room. He was British, he was middle class, he was polite. He never stood a chance.

With the guest for show one sorted, we now needed the car. It had to be reasonably priced, it had to be uncool in an underdog way, it could only have a modest amount of power so that non-petrolhead celebs would feel comfortable flooring it, and it had to be from a manufacturer who would agree to give us a car. In truth this last point was sort of the clincher, as we discovered when carmaker after carmaker put the phone down on us. But the chap at Suzuki, a wise old fox, understood the tongue in cheekness of the whole venture and stumped up a lovely Liana, little knowing that this unassuming boxy saloon would one day become the most famous car on the planet.

A month later Harry Enfield found himself piloting the Liana around an airfield and then sitting opposite Jeremy in a hangar, telling an audience of 60 gentlemen in Subaru fleeces – chaps who kind of preferred watching Colin McRae to Tim Nice But Dim – all about the experience. The genial comedy maestro didn't really know what was going on, as you can see from his bemused face in that original show, but nevertheless The Star in a Reasonably Priced Car was off the launch pad and heading for the stratosphere.

Sort of. The problem was that no matter how often we sat in Jeremy's local, we weren't going to get a celebrity brushing past every week. We called in favours from celebrity petrolheads we knew – Jay Kay and Steve Coogan in particular, both of whom agreed without hesitation, and I will forever be in their debt for that. However, Steve, Jay and Harry gave us a grand total of three, we had ten slots to fill and Renée and Renato weren't returning our calls.

It was at this point we got lucky again. Jeremy rang me one afternoon, just as I'd got off the phone to Bobby Davro's agent, telling me that he'd bumped into a famous knight of the realm who would love to come and drive a small Japanese saloon around a track. Yes, Sir Michael Gambon was up for it. We are talking here about not only one of the greatest actors of all time, but a man who had refused all chat shows, including Parky. However what those shows didn't offer was the chance to riff about cars and engines and gearboxes and all the things it turned out that Gambon loves. Dumbledore himself was our first petrolhead-who-youwouldn't-think-was-a-petrolhead, and TopGear would go on to unearth quite a few of these, including Kevin McCloud, Joanna Lumley and Jennifer Saunders.





Sir Michael
Gambon, knight
of the realm,
secret petrolhead
and giver of his
name to a *TopGear*Track corner



Sir Gambon said he was free to do the following week's show, which quickly focused our minds on the sort of hospitality our guests were being offered. You see, most celebs when they go on Jonathan Ross or Graham Norton get given a comfy dressing room with en-suite bog, minibar, telly and basically everything you'd get in a top-end Premier Inn. We, however, in those days and I'm talking about the whole TopGear production crew - had to make do with a Portakabin the size of Frank and Pat Butcher's minicab office, so we could only afford to cordon off a quarter of it as a top celebrity hangout. Now this was fine for Jay Kay, who only requires some Jaffa Cakes and a chair to keep him happy, but a theatrical deity? How would this fleapit go down?

In the end, better than we could ever have imagined. Gambon turned up four hours early, pored over the old planes in the various hangars, then set off in the Liana to do his timed laps. Since he was quite old and wearing a jacket and tie, we weren't expecting a blistering performance, but then came the moment when he barrelled into the final corner on two wheels, giving the thumbs up to the camera as he went. In honour of his bravery, we instantly named the corner after him, but Gambon's near-death antics were of much greater significance. He had put the Star in a Car segment on the map - people were no longer talking about it as a bit of telly where petrolheads could have a bit of fun, but as a thing where celebs you'd normally see on a comfy chat-show sofa were now pushing themselves in an exciting environment.

Slowly, the guest list started to fill up. Patrick Stewart gave us the nod. At that time he was at the height of his Hollywood fame with the *X-Men* and *Star Trek* movies, but like Gambon – maybe old English thesps







STARS IN AND OUT OF CARS James McAvoy: 1:43.6 despite going over the grass. Tom Cruise and Cameron Diaz: Hollywood royalty come to shonky Dunsfold office

are just well-mannered – he turned up early and unannounced. In fact, when we saw this chap in jeans and a baseball cap walking towards us, Jeremy turned and said: "Sorry mate, we're just going through the script here. If you're dropping a car off, can you talk to one of the lads in the officccccce... Mr Stewart so nice of you to come how are you please have a seat can I get you a coffee?"

A couple of series in, we got our first big American star, Lionel Richie. Since he would obviously be coming with an entourage and a scary manager, we figured we needed to hire our first-ever celebrity Winnebago. Roger, our production manager at the time, is the tightest man you'll ever meet, so when the man from Ace Winnebago Hire opened up with: "The cheapest one comes for £200..." Roger stopped him right there and told him to deliver it promptly for Lionel day. When it did turn up, it was browny beige and would have easily fitted in the bathroom of Jenson Button's motorhome. But no matter – it was better than a quarter of a Portakabin.

Then Lionel arrived, as expected, with a convoy of three blacked-out Mercs and a very scary manager. That particular day was wet, cold and windy, and as the scary manager stood at the side of the track, his LA tan being stripped away by the sideways British rain, looking at his superstar talent pounding round in a small Japanese car, with no prospect of performing his new single, you just knew he was thinking: "What are we doing here?"

"So this is a popular show?" he asked, as he spat rainwater out of his mouth.

"Oh yes, very," I replied. "Millions and millions of viewe..." At that moment, I abandoned the sales pitch because he and I were both looking at Lionel careering across the tarmac in a shower of sparks, the front wheel having completely sheared off. The manager's jaw muscles did a little dance as the composer of 'Hello', wrestling with the remaining three wheels, hurtled across the grass and just missed a pile of tyres. Having retrieved Lionel, we decided he needed hot coffee and shelter from the rain, which meant it was time to unleash the Winnebago. As I opened its door, the smell of mildew from unloved velour came galloping out with quite considerable force, but nevertheless in full Basil Fawlty bowingand-scraping mode, I ushered Lionel and the scary manager up the steps. Once inside, they turned to look at me in stony silence. I peered past them, and it was then that I saw the sole decoration on the wall - an old Athena poster of the Twin Towers.

While I beat Roger the production manager to death around the back of the

Winnebago, Lionel settled in and, as it turned out, was charm personified. In his climb to the top, he'd clearly encountered much worse setbacks than a front-suspension collapse, and he happily joked about lawyers and whiplash claims, and then delivered beautifully in the interview. Basically he gave a masterclass in how to be a big star of the old school.

As one series followed another, the popularity of Star in a Car slowly grew, along with the surrealness of the mix. One week it would be Roger Daltrey, a proper rock god, stopping mid-lap and asking for a nice cup of tea; the next, it would be Johnny Vegas, still on L plates, stopping mid-lap and asking for a can of Tennent's Extra. Equally diverse was the quality of driving. At one bookend you had the likes of Simon Cowell, who we thought was just an overgroomed lightentertainment luvvie, but in fact was a brilliantly focused and brave driver who topped the board on both of his appearances. At the other end of the bookshelf you had Terry Wogan, who never understood or cared that setting a lap time required a different attitude to driving than when you drove to work. In the middle, you had Jimmy Carr, a one-man wrecking ball who had the conviction of Cowell, but was so mental behind the wheel that he rarely managed to complete a lap. I remember driving down to the start line to check on his progress, only to come across The Stig, who doubled as the celebrity tutor, coming the other way. "I give up with that t**t," he announced with uncharacteristic vigour. "He just won't listen, and he'll end up on his roof." Stig also said it was a shame, because in the rare seconds that Jimmy focused, he was a very natural driver. We pulled Jimmy in, forced the cheeky comic to focus via a bit of tough love, and, as Stig had predicted, he went top of the board.

After several series we chopped in the Suzuki Liana and replaced it with the Chevy Lacetti. By now we were no longer

"LIONEL ARRIVED WITH A CONVOY OF BLACKED-OUT MERCS AND A SCARY MANAGER"





Tom Cruise: forget the Ferrari in Risky Business – all he ever wanted to drive was a Kia Cee'd





big names, we had to do something we'd hoped we never would, which is let them plug stuff. The diehard TopGear fans whinged, but there wasn't an infinite supply of petrolhead celebrities out there and the show was starting to go global, so we had to play the game. I guess the turning point was Hugh Grant, who came on to promote a romcom to five million bemused Subaru fans, but in return we got a blindingly funny interview - he is one of the greats in a chatshow chair - and an A-list name we could then use as a magnet for other A-listers.

For me personally, the most tumultuous megastar moment came when Ronnie

we wanted him on to promote his autobiography. Now I bow to no one in my love of the Stones. I have the bootlegs, the rare vinyl nerd records, the ticket stubs from countless concerts, the mental memory stick of pointless trivia that would make you kill me if we were stuck in a lift. All I'd never done was met an actual Stone, and here was my chance, which was why everyone was quite surprised when I said no. It wasn't a case of "never meet your heroes", it was just that I knew the Stones had lived in a bubble for pretty much all of their years, a parallel universe where questions were vetted and anything they didn't want to do was

god and fan of strong coffee

removed from their path before they even knew it would have been there. And if you exist in that sort of environment, the odds are that you won't give a good interview because, well, you've never had to; you've never been judged on how funny, revealing or entertaining you are or aren't, and never been told you were boring, either. I didn't want Jeremy to have to struggle with a monosyllabic rock god, so with a heavy heart, I declined the offer. But then Ronnie's publisher rang back and said she knew where I was coming from, but that this would be Ronnie on his own, not Ronnie in Rolling Stones world. Would I like to go around to his house to meet him and have a chat? There was a silence, followed by the sound of all my high-minded principles collapsing in a shameless heap, then finally me squeaking: "What's the address?"

Ronnie himself was waiting on the doorstep to meet me, which made me so nervous, I nearly backed into his Bentley. Inside he had an espresso machine on permanent dispensation mode, and while he drank his 28th coffee of the morning, he told me how much he was looking forward to coming on the show. I suspected he was just being polite and hadn't actually seen it, and when his daughter had to explain to him who The Stig was, that sort of confirmed things. This mattered not a jot to me, though, because I was already totally starstruck and half an hour later I was also off my tits on quadruple-strength coffee.

By then I'd completely forgotten that I'd come to find out if he'd be any good on the show, and was jabbering on about all the Stones concerts I'd seen, reeling off set lists, who did what guitar solo, etc., basically showing off until he'd realise I was the best friend he'd never had. I think at some point he got a word in and mentioned he'd heard I was worried he might not be great as an interview: "Nonsense," I howled in a caffeine-fuelled yelp. "That must be someone else, not me." Finally I said I'd see him at the track next Wednesday and he opened his laptop, pulled up an email and said innocently: "Yeah, Dunsfold, I've got the address and the details and everything right here."

Inside my coffee-filled head a small bomb went off: "What!!!??? Hang on a minute!!" I thought. "Ronnie's a Rolling Stone. A Rolling Stone should not be cluttering up his godlike Rolling Stone brain with mundane drivel such as addresses and arrival times - that sort of task is for mere ordinary people." Since my neurological system was now basically powered by espressos, I decided to share my thoughts with him: "You shouldn't

know that! It's not right!" I declared loudly, and then left a rather baffled Ronnie looking at his laptop as I bid farewell and powered off down his driveway.

If you caught that show, you'll know he was great: funny, modest, charming in his shyness, and I seem to recall he nearly wiped out half the camera crew on the final corner. But that would have been OK. He's a Rolling Stone.

There were many other happy memories from the Chevy Lacetti era. Brian Johnson, what a legend – the blueprint for being world-famous and not letting it change you. He must have been half an hour signing autographs in the audience. Usain Bolt – sheer charisma, Sienna Miller – top girl, James Blunt – too funny, and Eric Bana, who I think could have been top of the Lacetti board if it hadn't been a wet day on his visit. We'll never know, but what we do know is the little Chevy ended its reign with Jay Kay as its fastest pilot.

Although the Lacetti eventually gave way to the Kia Cee'd, the original Suzuki Liana was still putting in the occasional appearance, on account of it being needed for the Formula One drivers. This little Star in a Car spinoff had begun with Damon Hill, and eventually the board boasted most of the big names, including Lewis, Jenson, Mark Webber and Vettel. Even though we are talking about a 1.6-litre roly-polysuspensioned car, all of these guys took their stint in the Liana extremely seriously, because it was the one time they got to compare themselves in the same car. They would quiz the hapless TopGear producer in charge about all sorts of nonsense: "What was the track temperature when Vettel came down?" "What were the tyre pressures when Lewis did his laps?" Then their hearts would all sink when they asked where the timing device was positioned and the producer would point to a researcher with his finger poised over the stopwatch on his mobile.

I say all the F1 drivers took the Liana lap seriously, but there was an exception and, as you can probably guess, he's Finnish and currently drives for Ferrari. At the time he visited us, Kimi was just returning to F1 with Lotus, and you'd think most drivers coming back to the top arena in motorsport would be anxious to prove they'd still got it. Not this boy. Admittedly it was a wet day, so he was never going to go top of the board, but even so after half a dozen laps, he'd had enough and headed for the arms of the La-Z-Boy chair and the warmth of his motorhome. Don't get me wrong: he wasn't sulky – he was perfectly amiable – he just

genuinely didn't give a shit what people would think or not think about his lap time.

I went into his motorhome and told him it had stopped raining and the track was drying, which it was. Reluctantly, he pushed himself up in the La-Z-Boy, peered out of the window at the now obviously drying tarmac, then said, "No, I don't think it is," and flopped back into the chair.

"Kimi," I said, "there's a lot of F1 fans, us here included, who are really excited about you coming back and you do not want to be watching this show on Sunday night with that lap time, which I can't tell you, but you really can do better." I thought he was going to tell me to sod off, but eventually he smiled – well, arranged his lips slightly differently – and said "God, it's worse than F1 here," then got up, went outside and did some more laps. He could have gone faster than he eventually did because the track was drying all the time, but whatever. I can at least put on my gravestone: "I got Kimi Räikkönen to shift his arse."

The one F1 driver who didn't do the lap was Michael Schumacher. Although he was in temporary retirement at that point, he clearly was not going to muck about with the myth surrounding the greatest statistical driver of all time. However, Jeremy and I had met him several times over the years and seen him grow from an uptight youth into one of the most amiable gentlemen in the pit lane. There isn't the space here to recount the personal experiences I've had of his decency, or of similar stories I've heard from people I know, including my wife when she worked at Minardi. Bottom line, I admire that man immeasurably, and it was no surprise therefore that he agreed to out himself as The Stig when it was put to him.

Michael's day at the track kicked off in typical *TopGear* fashion. Since he was arriving in his private jet, flight plans had been logged, permissions to land obtained, and at 9.15am his pilot was lining up on the approach path, as arranged, when suddenly the control tower heard the voice of another pilot: "Erm, Foxtrot Alpha Papa Tango James May. Hello, receiving wilco over." Yes, James was also lining up in his Sopwith Tiger Moth or whatever it is, which in turn meant Schumacher's pilot had to suddenly make new plans.

Once the seven-times world champion was finally on the ground, he got ready to do a lap in the Ferrari FXX. Now normally The Stig takes the F1 drivers around first, just to show them how the track goes, but Schumacher wouldn't get in his car because it was a Jaguar and since he had an endorsement deal with Ferrari/







Michael Schumacher: forget what you think you know about him, and realise that he's truly special

Maserati he couldn't be seen in any other brand. "No problem, you go around; I'll follow you in my car," Schumacher said to Ben Collins, our Stig at the time. And thus Ben filled up his gravestone epitaph as he barrelled round the track with Schumacher on his arse in an FXX.

Michael then wanted to say hello to Jeremy, Richard and James. "I'll go get them," I said, knowing full well the state of the little scripting room they sat in. "No, it's OK" said Michael, "I'll go see them." There is little doubt his temple of a body would have convulsed as he walked into the wall of ciggie smoke in the room. Then he perched on the bank-holiday-sale DFS sofa and had a good chat with the boys, even though his eyes kept being drawn to the collection of cock and balls illustrations on the wall. We told him that guests were sometimes invited to contribute one, but he politely declined the marker pen. What I do remember though is him saying that the first corner on our Heath Robinson circuit was "pretty interesting", which is good enough for me.

We then asked him to think of some answers to some daft questions in The Stig reveal interview, and if you never saw the moment he took The Stig helmet off, I urge you to watch it, because it's the most electrifying studio moment in our whole history.

Schumacher is alright. Better than alright. I still cannot believe a man of such talent, for whom mobility and speed is such a fundamental urge, sits now as a prisoner of his body, and I really hope that one day medicine provides the key to release him from his cell.

Back, though, to the amateur drivers, and by the time we entered the Kia Cee'd era, we were pulling in the big names quite regularly. Ryan Reynolds - one of the top five funniest men you'll ever meet; Mick Fleetwood - legend; Rowan Atkinson deeply shy and a complete gentleman. Then one day we got the call that the man we'd often joked about, as in: "Oh yeah, you've got more chance of getting Tom Cruise on", was actually up for coming on. What's more, he would be with Cameron Diaz. Now having experienced the entourage nonsense that accompanies any normal Hollywood Alister, we expected the hoo-ha surrounding Tom and Cameron's visit to be off the scale. And it was. A security team came to check out the track. Approximately 48,000 people would be coming from the film company. Then a couple of days before the visit, we were sent a timetable for how the day itself would run, and it wasn't short on detail. Tom would arrive at 12.01. He would say





"WE EXPECTED THE HOO-HA OF TOM CRUISE'S VISIT TO BE OFF THE SCALE"

hello to Jeremy, Richard and James at 12.04. He would go into his motorhome at 12.07. He would reappear at 12.09 and get in the Kia Cee'd at 12.11, and so on and so on.

All of this went to s**t at, I don't know, let's say 10.04, when we heard the thrum of rotor blades and Tom's helicopter deposited him on the ground a full two hours early. He'd got up, decided he wanted to get down to the track, and the truth is, the fuss and nonsense that precedes the man is most definitely not the man. As for the timetable, he talked with everybody, goofed about and hardly went in his motorhome once, but

what impressed me most was how he handled the film company people. Basically, when he'd done his laps it was raining, but then the sun came out, the track dried, and he turned and said: "I'd really like to do my laps again. Do you think I can?"

"You definitely should," I said, "I can tell you'll regret it if you don't do a dry time. Trouble is, you've got 48,000 people standing right behind you who've got you on a really tight schedule because they need to get you to your film premiere in the West End." Now at this point, he could have simply flexed his Biggest Star in the World muscles and declared that that was what he was going to do. But instead, he asked the film company people if it would be OK for him to go again, and when he saw the anxiety on their faces, he suggested they scrap the time they'd allotted for going to the hotel to shower and get dressed for the premiere. "I can change in the car on the way there," he said. Genuinely, he was one of the nicest guests we've ever had at the track, as indeed was Cameron Diaz. I remember at one point telling her that Jeremy would be asking her how her nose looked so perfect, given that she'd broken it four times. "It's not perfect, it's terrible," she said. "Well, it just isn't - it's perfect," I retorted. She then took my hand and ran my finger up and down her nose. "Look, feel that," she said. "It's terrible." To be honest, though, I wasn't listening; I was too busy composing another epitaph for my gravestone.

Reading back through what I've written, I know it comes across a bit like a Hello! feature because I have not been critical of any of our guests. But the truth is, out of all the stars we had in the cars, only one (and I'm not going to say who it is) was a knob. The rest were anything from perfectly pleasant to an absolute joy. I don't know why that was. Maybe, as they sat in our terrible student bedsit of a green room with wonky pictures of previous celebs and a fridge that kept the drinks warm, they appreciated the lack of the usual TV nonsense. Perhaps it was the fact they could have a fag without being tutted at or simply that they could bomb around a track - or both of these things, in Michael Fassbender's case. I think a lot enjoyed it, though, because they came down believing they would embarrass themselves at the wheel of a car but then, with a little help from The Stig, pushed themselves right out of their comfort zones and found themselves in a place they never expected to be, and actually really liked.

I dunno. I'm just glad nobody got hurt – I honestly can't remember if we ever bothered to take out any insurance.



We have just 24 hours with the Lambo Aventador LP 750-4 SV... so let's drive the wheels off it

WORDS: TOM FORD / PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK FAGELSON



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upercars are pointless. This is a conclusion drawn from the slinky bulwark of a Lamborghini Aventador LP 750-4 Super Veloce that's currently staring at the back of a

tipper lorry that smells worryingly of bacon, schlepping forlornly along one of London's viciously clogged arterial roads. I have around 740bhp from a glorious, naturally aspirated V12. When pushed, my paddleshift gearbox reacts in just 50 milliseconds. I have all-wheel-drive traction, air-bending downforce and a top speed of more than 217mph. And it is all, without question, completely gelded by insidious

traffic planning and dubious roadworks. It's like having a powerboat in a paddling pool.

It's not all a wasted opportunity, mind. There are some advantages. For instance, you can tell that the Lamborghini looks the part and is undoubtedly doing its job as a piece of ring-road theatre, entertainment in an otherwise mind-numbing slug of a journey. You can ascertain its visual appeal by the sheer number of people trying to video it while steering with their wrists, the two near misses and man who stoutly fell off his bicycle near Park Royal. It's not hard to see why: in a time where surfacing is subtle and mature, colours muted and chosen for resale rather than preference, a bloody chunk of Lambo steak in a visually vegetarian world is something glorious.





"IT'S BRUTALLY QUICK, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. BUT IT'S ALSO SLIGHTLY ANGRY, AND A BIT INTIMIDATING"



It's probably worth having a proper stare, too. We have generous wingspan, metallic red bodywork littered with important-looking flashes of carbon fibre acting as boundaries to gaping intakes. Even the front splitter side vanes look suspiciously like fangs. There are four downturned central exhaust pipes like sad plumbing sticking out the back, and a finned rear diffuser that speaks the language of physics we can't see. But I want more than a 10second phone video. I want to see if the latest, greatest Lamborghini is more than just a show pony, and, to do that, first I must endure the third-tier hell that is London's South Circular. I have to deal with carbon-backed seats that sit you upright as a pious church pew - and give you backache in a bare 20 minutes - an ISR 7spd gearbox that slurs light changes in its comfiest mode with a lazy head-nod, and a truck-like width of well over two metres. The ride is supple but busy, probably because the rear tyres are basically horizontal, rubberised oil drums at a gloriously proportioned 335/25/21, and there's a real tendency for the SV to hunt cambers and pinch at bumps. There's little sound-deadening, and it gives you some of the sonar abilities of a common bat - you can hear the imperfections in the road, get an idea of the texture of the tarmac via your hearing as well as your bottom.

The stats? Well, they're not altogether as impressive as you might think. The Super Veloce isn't that much more powerful than the standard Aventador – and roughly 50bhp up on the LP700-4 doesn't sound like it's going to be transformative. And although weight is down by 50kg, that's mostly down to the loss of that sound deadening and the application of the torturous lightweight seats. The carbon monocoque remains, supported by an aluminium subframe at either end as before, but now there's a carbon engine cover, rear spoiler and static carbon side scoops (weighty, electrically motivated items on the normal car), an aluminium bonnet, front bumper and doors and an SMC rear bumper.

The complicated summation of the addition of extra power and subtraction of a smidgen of plumpness equate to a 10 per cent increase in

power-to-weight, all accessed at the top end of the rev range. Which isn't much. But this is one of those tricky two-plus-two-equals-five moments: the sum of the parts definitely does not equal what you get.

Because when I accelerate onto an open road and the traffic clears a bit, the 750-4 starts to show its teeth. And those teeth are wicked. Third and fourth gears get illegal very quickly. Apparently. There are seven gears, the last four of which, should you choose to deploy them fully, will scale perfectly with the length of prison sentence. It is, for all the basic Aventador foibles, still an astonishing car. There is nothing like the throttle response of an engine that relies on nothing more than atmospheric pressure to make fuel and air go bang. There's no boost moment. There's also no cam change or step in the shove, just a constant, big-engined accelerative weight right up to a howling 8,400rpm. This is a 6.5-litre V12 doing what it does best, and the SV-specific tweaks changes to the variable valve timing, intake system and exhaust - allow it more freedom to express itself. That, and the 8,400rpm red line and new lightweight exhaust system. It's brutally quick, no doubt. But it's also slightly angry, and a bit intimidating. It's a reminder of what old people call a 'proper supercar'.

I find an empty stretch of road and deploy a fast start. This was probably a mistake. It starts off cool and calm, with a few innocent button presses and a mischievous glint. Left foot on brake, right foot on the throttle, build the revs. Then flatten the right and remove the left. There's a tense moment as the V12 growls, an endless millisecond of gathered pause, and then an accelerative punch in the diaphragm and an involuntary expression of mild panic.

Time both stretches and becomes compressed, vision narrows, and fingerprints fuse indelibly to the Alcantara steering wheel. It doesn't so much launch as explode. In fact, the initial three seconds – by which time you'll be doing near the legal UK speed limit – causes a kind of cognitive whiplash. A mental buffering that means your brain has to spin a little egg-timer and do some glacially slow organic thinking just to put the experiences into some sort of order, so that you might understand what the





"IT MAKES THE KIND OF NOISE THAT MAKES LIVESTOCK SCATTER"

bloody hell just happened. Just enough time to think, quite clearly: "This is how a golf ball feels."

This isn't seamless, electrical thrust like a Tesla P85D, or the even-tempered, shaped charge of a Porsche 918. This is a good ol' fashioned cannonshot, full of noise and drama and a strange keening that apparently I make when scared. You are assailed by accelerative g, mauled by V12 scream. Suddenly the steering wheel becomes vitally important, and the car skitters and thumps, pulsing torque between the axles to give the best possible grip. It's brutal, and old-school effective. Essentially it's a stylish sledgehammer with seats. And the noise. It makes the kind of noise that makes the hairs on the back of your neck flip vertical, and livestock scatter. It is, with appropriate capitalisation: An Experience.



But this is also one of those cars that's actually very tiring. My back is basically ruined after 10 hours in the seat, and as the light fades, I get bored with negotiating traffic, people and things, and the light sheen of fear that comes with trying to drive it quickly without buttering it up a tree, and decide to call it a night.

Ten minutes later, I'm back in the car thumbing the starter button. I've only got 24 hours with it. So it's time to keep driving. All night if needs be.

It takes many hours. This is not a car you get quickly comfortable with, intellectually or physically, at all. But the more I drive the SV, the more it reveals itself. It's a strange one, this. The gearbox manages to be both better sorted than the Aventador, and still not as good as proper modern DSG paddleshifts. It's

a bit of an oddity, having as it does one clutch but two shifting rods (like a one-handed DSG), and just a bit rough. It thumps and huffs, sometimes fluffing changes in traffic, and will grab a gear with a real bang at mid to heavy throttle openings. Drive it with a bit of sympathy and you can smooth it out, but you have to drive around it, until you realise that at full throttle, at the top of the red line in Corsa mode, shifts are almost seamless. Which tells you pretty much all you need to know about what Lamborghini was expecting from this car.

The way it rides is also a tad counterintuitive. The racecar-spec pushrod suspension is now magnetorheological and adaptive, which means that the springs are only a little bit stiffer than standard, but the ride is actually more supple on a typical road.

I'd go so far as to say that (as with a few of these more focused semi-specials) the more expensive damping and springing actually make the hardcore car ride better than standard – especially on our weather-beaten UK B-roads. But that's not to say it's not restless, or soothing. The trade-off for such pointiness is that there's a good portion more feel than the standard LP700-4, and the whole car feels more lively, more together, and yes, when you push on, quite a bit more nervous than non-Veloce.

There are the usual three modes consisting of Strada (road), Sport (uh... Sport) and Corsa (Race) available from the switchgear on the centre console, and they now gently fiddle the 'box, engine response, suspension, AWD bias and steering. There's a mechanical locking diff out back and an electronic









pseudo-diff provided by the ESP system on the front. And the electric twiddling modifies the character of the SV to a decent and noticeable degree. The dynamic steering has a variable-ratio rack that changes constantly, and again, you have to get used to it, but when going quickly, it calms down and is actually pretty good. Just don't be too forceful with it, or the SV dives headfirst into corners, feeling like it's swinging its bottom – and engine – in behind.

Other than that, grip is predictably enormous, and Corsa mode will let the tail step out a little which is enough for UK roads. You'd have to be very confident or have a lot of space to play with ESP totally off. Preferably somewhere the size of Yorkshire, for complete security. And yes, we're talking mechanical grip. The SV has, as you may have noticed, quite a lot of aero, but I'm unconvinced about the downforce unicorn - something that lots of people believe in, but can't see. There are charts and graphs that prove that the various splitters and spoilers work (170 per cent more than a standard LP 700-4 and 150 per cent more efficiency) and that rear wing is manually adjustable and offers three angles of attack: choose between 186, 202 or 218kg of downforce at a speed you'll never actually achieve.

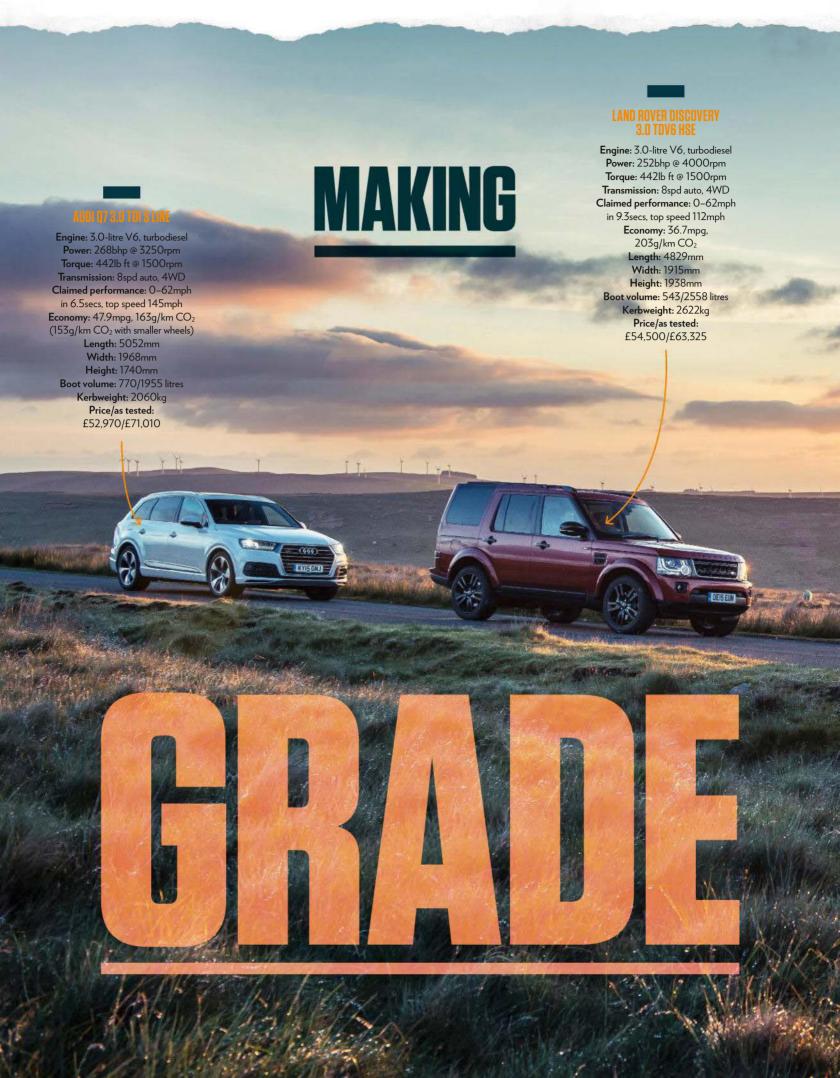
In 99 per cent of situations you can't use it, you can't see it when you do. In most cars equipped with it, you have to be doing somewhere in the region of one hundred and fifty miles per hour, and even then you have to be qualified enough to realise that it's working. You might as well tell me that at 150mph the car turns into the Millennium Falcon and shoots kittens from the exhausts. Now, if they can invent downforce that works sub 100-ish mph, I might have some chance of understanding what all the fuss is about, but honestly? On a UK road, the physical

manifestation of SV downforce is only useful as a handy table, and provides some shade in summer.

The truth is that the Aventador SV is the froth on the cappuccino of an anachronism. The standard Aventador already lives in a slightly fragile, old-school niche – attractive though it is – of V12, mid-engined natural aspiration. Its ISR paddle 'box isn't by any means cutting edge, and it certainly hasn't got any KERS-analogue electrical filler. Yes, there's AWD, but it's Haldex gen IV (a Golf R is already on the fifth generation of the system) not the torque-vectoring magicianship of something like a Nissan GT-R's ATTESA, and the traction control doesn't have the ego-friendly fluency of Ferrari's Side Slip Control that can make even the most ham-fisted heroic.

To then add 'lightness' to the tune of 50kg – which isn't actually that much – up the power to around 740bhp when the standard car wasn't exactly wet, and add some weight back in with extra wings, is not so much gilding the lily as fluoro-wrapping it and serving it on a bed of freshly cut overkill.

I want to dislike the SV. Because it's daft, and uncomfortable, and a bit uncouth, both visually and to drive. But I can't. It's not new age, or next generation, not filled with tech tricks and the newest of fangles. It's an Aventador wound up to a bit past 11, for those people who just like a little bit more. For £350k it's a proper challenge to drive quickly, and you're probably looking at another couple of hundred grand to get close to beating it. And it is pointless. But it's the kind of pointless that makes you get up early in the morning, the kind of pointless that makes people crash their bicycles. It's the kind of pointless that makes you drive all night, a car that you never step out of without an opinion. And that's the kind of pointless that dreams are made of.





e may be deep in the heart of Wales, but the Discovery is the only car we bother doing any off-road stuff with. After all, who buys an SUV for its off-roading ability? Only people with

a penchant for those khaki vests with all the pockets, as far as I can work out. However, if you genuinely are a green-laner, horsebox-towist or adventure-traveller and those activities are your absolute priority, buy the Land Rover Discovery. That's it, end of story, read no further. Ladies and gentlemen of an outdoorsy persuasion, you have your winner.

But we all know that most Discovery owners have never so much as twiddled the Terrain Response dial beyond grass/gravel/snow. Because it's not what matters to them. What they like is the reassurance that only mass and height can bring. They want a big, safe car because the lives of the people they care about are at stake (and yes, I do appreciate the irony of buying an inherently less stable car for safety reasons).

SUVs are where you put the things you want to keep safe and out of harm's way. Precious stuff like kids and dogs and other breakables. They're automotive bubble wrap, secure transportation cells for concerned parents.

Volvo makes safe cars. We all know that because it's been ramming it down our throats for years. But even Swedish safety wasn't cool until the XC90 came along. Think about all those 440s and 740s: driven by crash test dummies in adverts, beloved by the antique-moving masses. No one without a tweed affliction would be seen dead in one. Even the 850 T5 didn't manage to upset the balance quite enough.

Then, back in 2002, the XC90 arrived and overnight Volvo became a different company. Here was a car with all the people-carrier smarts of a Renault Espace, but built into an SUV, a car that people actually wanted to be seen in. And by Volvo, too, so you knew your bairns would be safe. That's basically the holy trinity for families.

It was by no means the first seven-seat off-roader, but it was the best executed. Wellheeled buyers flocked to its banner, and no one cared that it was a pudding in corners and couldn't pull the skin off one in a straight line. So Volvo sat back, raked in the profits and, every so often, gave the car a gentle tweak. It kept this up for 13 years. Still basically the same car, still selling well.

And now a new one. And it turns out Volvo wasn't wasting those years. Everything is new. New chassis (which will go on to underpin all new mid-size and upwards Volvos), new engines (both petrol and diesel use a common engine block), boron steel safety cell, and "the most comprehensive and technologically sophisticated standard safety package available in the automotive industry". It may be only a fraction bigger, but it's a lot cleverer.

The Audi Q7 used to be one of those slightly objectionable SUVs that the Germans built simply because they needed something in this sector, knew it would sell on the strength of its badge, and didn't have the willingness (or maybe ability) to give it the capabilities of the Discovery or the packaging of the XC90.

This is the new one. You can tell because it now looks like an estate car. It, too, is built on



a flexible new platform that will underpin everything from the Audi A4 to the Bentley Bentayga, contains elements of the Audi TT's technology and interior design, claims to have lost 300kg and comes across as a much more tightly knit and thoughtfully conceived product. A brave one, too, given its roofline is a whopping 200mm nearer the ground than the Disco's.

Ah yes, the Discovery itself: 2.6 tonnes (or thereabouts – it seems almost rude to ask) of pedigree off-roader with a rugged family car attached. A new one is coming – should be here before the end of the year, in fact – but in the meantime, this is still the familiar 3.0-litre diesel version of Land Rover's phenomenally successful block of flats.

The Audi's also stoked along by a 3.0-litre diesel, but in line with Volvo's forward-thinking policy, the XC90 can call on the support of only two litres and four cylinders. That's the biggest capacity Volvo will offer. I know, I was surprised too. And then staggered. Because it's hard to believe only two litres can have this much effect on two tonnes.







Relatively speaking, the XC90 is perky and responsive, and has a turn of pace far beyond anything the old one was capable of. Far beyond the Discovery, too. There's less inertia in the engine so it pretty much matches the Q7 for initial reaction, just doesn't have the continuing in-gear pace. At low speeds it's detectably a four-cylinder, the cultured smoothness of its rivals notable for its absence, but once up and running? No complaints.

Well, it would be nice if the gearbox was a bit more alert – the Audi's is more polished. In fact, the whole Audi driving experience is very well sorted. The lowering of the car seems to be a physical as well as visual trick – the centre of gravity appears to have dropped, so the Q7 moves easily and reassuringly. The steering is light, it gets about smoothly and moves with reasonable grace. It might roll a bit, but not nearly so much as the Disco, and any movements are progressive and well controlled. And it's so quiet. No wind noise, no tremors from the suspension, just relaxing progress and hushed engine. And it rides with real panache, soft and cosseting with not a trace of external noise.

Both the Q7 and the Disco come with air suspension as standard. On the Volvo it's a £2,150 option. You must have it. Must. I drove three separate XC90s, and on standard suspension it's just too busy. Too much road noise, rather wriggly and restless at low speeds and generally not as refined, silent and comfortable as either the Audi or the Land Rover. Bit of a miss. Adding air suspension makes a decent difference, but is not transformative. It still feels a little grumbly in comparison with the Q7.

The flip side of this is that the XC90 handles well. No, it's not something that should prick the senses of driving enthusiasts, but how Volvo has made something this big drive with such ease and dexterity is impressive. Turn the small-diameter steering wheel and the XC90 responds promptly and corners flatly. It's easy to place on the road, it demands no compromise, no amendment of driving style. It's the widest car here, yet feels the smallest and most wieldy. It's so good-natured – schoolrun mums are going to love it.

Or will they? What the XC90 doesn't have is the same air of unstoppable progress as the Discovery. It feels less massive and substantial, and so arguably less reassuring. There's a lovely cadence and pace to the Disco. There's no sense of rush; it's a very unhurried car. And an unhurriable one. The steering is heavy and the whole car rather cumbersome.

But sat up this high, you feel so well protected from the world outside and there's a thickness to the driving experience that's a direct result of the weight involved. It gives the Discovery momentum and helps make the ride silent and soothing.

Inside, though, the Disco has now badly lost ground to its rivals. Well, that's if you view the utilitarian vibe as a bad thing. Drinks will be spilled in these cars, there will be mud, and sandwich crusts and apple cores will be rediscovered years later. You won't mind in the Discovery. You will in the others. They look and feel pretty in comparison.

As the driver, you'll like the Audi best. I know, not the Volvo despite its portrait centre screen. It's touchscreen only, which means the screen smears









You can carry seven full-size adults in all of these cars, so nearly a whole scrum can jump in to go to watch rugby at Twickenham. However, in both the Audi (right) and Land Rover (left), the middle row has to be awkwardly tumbled forward to gain access to the back, and the Audi's seats are rather firm and flat. The rear row may be electrically operated, but it's the least spacious. All have sliding middle-row seats, and, when folded, the Disco's push down closer to the floor to maximise load space. Despite that, it's the Volvo (middle) that delivers the most passenger space and best features.







(Volvo actually supplies a cloth to clean it with) and you're forever jabbing the wrong buttons. It's still comfortably the best touchscreen I've ever used, but the Audi is a real step on as well, with its touchpad control and copycat TT configurable dash screen. Both are lovely things with great driving positions, fabulous seats and a frankly pointless range of micro-control over every aspect of their systems.

It's the Volvo's ambience that gives it a marginal edge. Where the Disco is rugged and plasticky and the Audi is self-consciously stylish, the Volvo generates a real sense of wellbeing. It's just fresher and more soothing for the soul.

And so well designed and packaged where it counts. Here's the difference between them all. The Audi's rearmost seats flip up and down electrically. It's standard on S line versions. The Disco's are a fiddle, with lots of levers and all the mechanisms exposed ready to pinch fingers. The XC90? Sublime. Beautifully thought out single-lever adjustments. It's the only one with a tilt/ slide middle row to aid access to the back, where the headrests flip down automatically and where seat comfort has been thought about in all seven

perches. You might not notice all this initially, but I guarantee you'll come to appreciate it. It's not like Audi has merely gone through the motions with its seat design – it's better than that, but the rear row is dark and cramped, and it doesn't make you coo with wonder at the little things like the XC90 does. The Disco is good – light and spacious with cleverly tiered rows, but it's all a bit clunky to operate.

The Disco also has easily the biggest boot on paper, but that's because it has the highest ceiling. It's the Volvo that has the widest and deepest load space – in whatever seat configuration you choose. With all three rows up, it has very nearly twice the boot depth of the Disco. It's so well packaged.

One thing bugs me, though. For weight and cost reasons, Volvo has done away with the split tailgate. Yes, the flip-down part makes it more awkward to reach the back of the boot, but they're so useful for sitting toddlers on, having impromptu picnics or aiding loading without scratching the back bumper.

The Audi is by no means cramped or impractical, either – it just lacks the sheer attention to detail that sets the Volvo apart here. It actually runs the XC90 close in the safety stakes. Where Volvo has

Yep, that's some bodyroll. Disco not a fan of hard corners

IntelliSafe, Audi has Pre-Sense. Both are systems that can spot hazards and intervene, plus, of course, there are the usual array of lane-keep, radar cruise and blind-spot warning technologies to keep you on the straight and narrow.

Being half a tonne lighter, both Q7 and XC90 are also a good deal more economical than the Disco, which managed about 27mpg over 600 miles and three days, while the Audi hovered around the 33mpg mark and the Volvo 34mpg.

None is a cheap car. The popularity of the class has enabled the manufacturers to charge more, meaning a decent family SUV is now upwards of £50,000. That's a hill of money, but then these are probably the ultimate family cars, the best, most comfortable and safest way of ferrying those you care about. Without the cutting-edge tech and cabin design of the other two, it's the £54,500 Disco that looks the least attractive deal on paper. Lower-spec versions make more sense. Watch the options cost on the Audi, as the S line isn't as well equipped as the XC90 Inscription as standard. Daft name, Volvo.

It takes a long time for my thoughts to crystallise on this test. All the cars do a very good job and do it individually enough to make them all the best choice here depending on what your priorities are. Take the Q7. It's a much better car than I expected, is the best to drive and has that lovely driving environment. The XC90 hits the nail on the head for families, but even with air suspension, its ride and refinement mean that it's not quite as outstanding as I'd hoped. And if we go back to where we came in, you have the unstoppable Disco. Quite honestly, I'd be happy with any of them, and ideally you'd want an amalgam, but for me the Q7 falls first as its greatest strengths aren't in the conventional family SUV areas. The Disco is out next. I still adore it for its astonishing range of capabilities, but the XC90 feels cleverer, fresher, better packaged and more innovative. Winner, by a hair's breadth.







BMW X5 M SPORT

If you care about the driving and speed of your seven-seat SUV. there's always the BMW X5. Or the Range Rover Sport. We could have put them into this test alongside the XC90. but they skew the perspective slightly. They (and the Porsche Cayenne, if you permit a five-seater to join in) come at this from a different angle, one where the driving comes first and all else follows after.

However, if you already know it'll be a rare day that you need more than five seats, then get stuck in. The X5 40d, with its twin-

turbo 3.0-litre diesel (or even the smaller and cheaper 25d and 30d models), is a mighty thing and makes the Volvo feel a bit worthy. But the ride is slightly lumpy and you may well find the packaging restrictive come holiday time. You pays your money, etc.

But despite the emphasis shifting towards sportiness, where the normal answer would be "Just buy a 5-Series Touring instead," it's not that simple. Whether you're a driver or passenger, the appeal of the extra height, and all that goes with it, is a powerful one.









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PROGRESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP



The Jaguar E-type Speedster, created by Eagle is based on one of the company's E-type Sport models, which bring the legend discreetly and faithfully up to date. The performance from the Eagle all-aluminium 4.7 litre block results in an impressively low kerbweight of just 1008kg. With the big-bore E-type straight-six pumping out an easy 310bhp at a lowly 4800rpm and a torque figure of 340lb ft at just 3600rpm, the Lightweight promises a shattering performance. Heat dissipation and cooling efficiency is maximised through the use of Evans Waterless Coolants as used and recommend by Eagle, Honda, Kubota, Rotax, Polaris and many more. For more information on Evans unique cooling benefits please call us on 01792 572299 or visit www.evanscoolants.co.uk







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EDITED BY OLLIE MARRIAGE

TOPGEAR'S LONG-TERM CARS. TESTED AND VERIFIED

TEST OF THE MONTH Some say taste is subjective. They lie 101 READY p147

A Rangie towing a Willys. How cool is that?

The hybrid game-changer is off too. Very bad news Time to test out the brakes, with a handy Jag...

The leccy city car is disconnected from $T\mathcal{G}$





Downsizing

hat's better. I've switched the TTS off its superbright 20in, £850 Y-Spoke alloys and onto its standard wheels, the

19in Star alloys. They don't fill the arches quite as well, but they give a much more purposeful stance. The old ones made the TTS look like it was constantly waiting to be admired. Now it looks slightly sporting.

The potential tyre bill has dropped by a third. The 255/30 ZR20s for the old wheels are about £200 a pop; the 245/35 ZR19s are £135. And no, the Hankook Ventus S1 Evo2s that are now on it are no cheaper than the now-gone Pirelli P Zeros.

The extra few mm in the sidewall has softened the car's approach to speed bumps, and although I don't think the steering is quite as incisive and grip may be not quite as strong, it's a trade I'm very happy I've made. Tyre noise seems a little less intrusive and the handling is more exploitable. I'm starting to settle into life with the TTS now. Except for the red seats, obviously.

REPORT 2

- 1984cc, 4cyl, 4WD, 306bhp, 280lb ft
- 38.7mpq, 169q/km CO₂
- 0-62mph in 4.9secs, 155mph
- **1365kg € £40,310/£48,970**

Total mileage 3252
Driver Ollie Marriage
Why it's here Does the TTS
have real sporting smarts? TDI?



HELLO ■ 1984cc, 4cyl turbo, AWD, 296bhp, 280lb ft ■ 40.9mpg, 159g/km CO₂ ○ 0-62mph in 4.9secs, 155mph ■ 1495kg £ £30,820/£41,330 **Total mileage 1340 Driver** Ollie Kew **Why it's here** Can we expose chinks in the ultimate Golf's armour?

W

ell, we needed to make life at *TG* as difficult as possible for our 2014 Hot Hatch of the Year. So, we've got a potentially very

desirable car in a very esoteric specification.

OK, I like the 19-inch Pretoria alloys (£895). And five doors (£655) is helpful for wrestling my bike onto the folded rear seats. But the seats themselves? They're £2,615 of carbon-fibre effect and cream nappa leather. The two-tone look is properly geriatric spec to my eyes and not conducive to blue-denim wearers. Maybe I'll start donning corduroy. Another £250 heats them. How stingy is that?

Clashing vibrantly with the beige seats is pearlescent white (sorry, Oryx) paintwork, for a princely £960. In bright, direct sunlight (fat chance), it looks sparkly, expensive and full of depth. The rest of the time, it's mucky white. Hmm. Blue, anyone?

I'll interject here that I didn't actually spec this particular Golf. 'My' perfect Golf R, I discovered after a rummage on the configurator, costs £36k. This one was specified by a nameless individual so fond of ticking boxes he'd choose, say, a brown Range Rover with black wheels and red seats. As such, obscenely it's north of 40 grand. And bearing down on an RS3.

Making up the difference is 'Apparently Superior Phone Connectivity' (£320), a gratuitous reversing camera (£165), beamed through upgraded big-screen satnav (£1,765) and thus-far woeful keyless entry (£365). £275 for extra rear side airbags too. Who wouldn't have them? I don't have little ones to protect, but my poor bike...







The best protected bicycle... in the world. Engine breathes out mainly through the two innermost of the quad pipes, so they're always sootier. Weird

And £830 of Dynamic Chassis Control? That's VW-speak for adaptive, tailored suspension, which boasts Comfort (soft but controlled), Normal (sweet spot) and Sport (stiffer but still tolerable) modes. Only 10 per cent of UK buyers tick it, but I think it could be key to the R's versatility and huge breadth of talent.

Finally, the £1,415 DSG gearbox. This Golf R gets the same 6spd transmission that lives in Ollie Marriage's Audi TTS (same powertrain entirely, in fact). The official figures crow it's more economical than the sweet manual, and faster (we'll see, on both counts). My 'perfect Golf R' spec featured a manual. Will living with DSG convert me? Can an ace chassis overcome my reservations about the Liberace costume? I'm looking forward to finding out.

GARAGE LOGBOOK

GOOD STUFF

▲ I'm running the best car I drove in 2014 for at least half of 2015. Happy days

A This might be the car that turns my head from manuals to DSGs...

BAD STUFF

▼ I've only completed two journeys so far without the frontal collision warning wrongly sounding

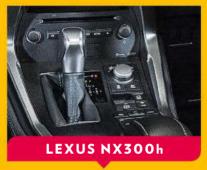
▼ Yes, the economy looks appalling, but it's been skewed by choked commutes

MILEAGE AND MPG THIS MONTH

0 0 0 9 3 0 7







Second opinion

ur inestimable art
editor Elliott Webb
has been driving the
NX300h of late. He's
a good judge of cars

and his dad used to own an RX, so I was doubly intrigued to hear his views on the NX. And especially what he thought of that CVT 'box that I so loathe.

Well, the good news is that he also didn't get on with the gearbox, saying it took all the enjoyment out of driving the NX on the open road. In fact, he said the open road really wasn't where the Lexus should be driven at all. He made a fair argument that it's actually a good car for around town because, despite its considerable size, he found it manoeuvrable and easy to slot through tiny, Londonstreet gaps. Plus, there's the bonus of being a bit higher up, so having much more forward vision than you get in an estate or hatch.



REPORT5 2993cc, V6 diesel, 4WD, 290bhp, 443lb ft 40.4mpg, 185g/km CO₂ 0-62mph in 6.8secs, 138mph 2115kg £ £76,250/£95,250 **Total mileage** 13,872 **Driver** Esther Neve **Why it's here** Is there any point in a Range Rover 'Sport'?

t doesn't happen very often, but, every now and then, I have an urgent and pressing need for a tow vehicle. The Lexus

NX300h I normally drive is somewhat lacking in the tow-bar department (and towing capacity, come to that...), but, fortunately, the RRS is totally up to the job.

I commandeered it (very nervously, considering how associate editor Tom Ford can be about the long-term cars he has) for a weekend trip to northern France.

First thing: Tow Assist is pure genius. If you're not a hardened towist, it takes almost all the stress out of pulling a trailer. You simply attach what you're pulling (in my case, a car trailer with our 1949 Willys jeep carefully ratcheted on), and the RRS asks you a series of questions, which help it to tailor its reactions to the type of trailer. Very clever.

Then you just drive. Quite literally. Down the motorway and onto the P&O. Nothing more complicated than that – the RRS sorts out all the necessary settings and even corrects any trailer sway. No stress.

Once you arrive at your destination, Tow Assist even has a function that shows you where the trailer will end up if you





Setting up the towing system on the Range Rover Sport is supersimple. Driving while towing is easier still move with your wheels in any given direction. This must have saved many people from making embarrassing mistakes, as reversing a trailer into a gap is never quite as easy as it appears. Well, it is, but only with Tow Assist!

Also, thanks to the RRS's torque and seamless power, it felt like we weren't towing at all. Really. We've towed with many cars over the years, but this was the first one that I can honestly say took all the pain out of the process.

The only thing that surprised me about towing with the RRS was the fuel consumption... I was pleasantly surprised when I checked it out and saw the economy figure was 25.7mpg. Astonishing and brilliant – another point in the Range Rover Sport's favour.

GARAGE LOGBOOK RANGE ROVER SPORT

GOOD STUFF

▲ Tow Assist and cameras make towing a walk in the park with the RRS

▲ For a long journey, I can't think of a more comfortable and cosseting car than the Sport

BAD STUFF

▼ Those wheels. Seriously. Who specced those? They make parking nerve-wracking

 No split tailgate. Nowhere to sit for an impromptu picnic. Sad face

MILEAGE AND MPG THIS MONTH

0 0 0 9 9 2



REPORT 4 2143cc, 4cyl diesel, RWD, 201bhp, 369lb ft 62.8mpg, 117g/km CO₂ 0-62mph in 6.9secs, 150mph 1660kg £ £37,125/£45,035 **Total mileage** 3444 **Driver** Owen Norris **Why it's here** Were we right to make this our Family Car of the Year?

Y

ou're looking at not only the *TopGear* Family Car of the Year but also the current World Car of the Year.

High praise indeed, and the longer I spend with the C-Class, the more I'm falling in love with it. It just does everything with amazing ease. Town driving? No worries. It wafts around and glides over bumps, making commuting a less draining experience. Motorways? It'll munch through hundreds of miles with no fuss at all, thanks to the many driving aids available. Lane Keeping Assist stops you from drifting into other lanes (as if any decent driver would), and Distronic Plus will maintain your speed and distance to the car in front, meaning all you have to do is sit there trying not to fall asleep. Add in the range of that 66-litre fuel tank, and the only time you'll have to stop will be for a comfort break. Sticking to sensible cruising speeds can reap huge range benefits too, acording to the on-board eco score. I managed to earn an extra 7.3 miles on a 50-mile journey recently, frugally averaging an mpg in the 50s. Impressive.

Nevertheless, the rise of the SUV continues unabated, and families seem to be opting for a compromised jacked-up crossover rather than the humble estate. Other than the occasional hankering for extra seats in the boot, I'm sure that this is just about the best car for me and my family. I don't want to be wrestling a buslike MPV around town when I'm on my own in the car for 90 per cent of the time anyway. I'd choose an estate every day of the week, thanks.









There's some stunning detail inside the new C-Class. The optional Burmester speakers not only look pretty, they are a music lover's dream

Just look at it too. It's a good-looking car, isn't it? Clean, modern curves and a good stance all add up to make a very pretty wagon indeed. I can't think of any other family car that looks anywhere near as good. And it gets many an admiring glance on the road. I think the spec helps, as the dark blue metallic paint and AMG spec set it off nicely. Inside, it's a masterpiece of interior design. Beautifully milled switchgear encourages you to play the 'is it plastic or metal' game, and with some buttons I'm still not sure – a testament to the level of luxury previously only offered to the limo classes.

On my travels, I often jot down notes when I'm stuck in traffic, and I wrote 'handsome mile-muncher' the other day. That sums it up perfectly. Do I really have to give it back?

GARAGE LOGBOOK C 250 BLUETEC AMG LINE ESTATE

GOOD STUFF

▲ Foot-wave boot operation is invaluable. I won't be able to live without it now

▲ Burmester surround-sound stereo system is nothing short of incredible

BAD STUFF

▼ Boot just isn't quite wide or long enough for our double buggy and much other luggage

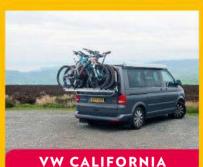
▼ Can't think of anything else!

MILEAGE AND MPG THIS MONTH

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40.8





Moor power!



HOTOGRAPHY: LEE BRIMBLE

ve been promising my mates this for ages – load mountain bikes onto the California and pile off somewhere for the

weekend. It's the sort of task that no other car can do remotely as well as the Cali. There's limo-thrashing legroom for two sixfoot-plusers in the back, countless rucksacks can be lobbed in the vast boot, there's a wipe-clean floor, on-board tea-making facilities and more pockets and cubbies for maps, tools, water, gloves and snacks than you can shake a bike pump at.

On a Friday evening, four of us piled in. It's a very social machine to travel in. Drinks and food can be passed easily back and forth, conversation is easy. Economy was appalling with the bikes on the back and the prospect of a welcoming pub at the far end, but even fully laden, the Cali handled Exmoor's twists and turns with aplomb.

How was it with four blokes sleeping in it? We're not that daft. We stayed in a youth hostel.

REPORT 11

• 1968cc, 4cyl TD, 178bhp, 295lb ft

37.2mpg, 199g/km CO₂

○ 0-62mph in 12.4secs, 117mph

2634kg £ £49,214/£58,834

Total mileage 19,867

Driver Ollie Marriage

Whysic's have 15/10/25

Why it's here Is VW's camper van worth 20 years of holidays in Spain?



GOODBYE 1998cc, 4cyl turbo petrol, FWD, 271bhp, 266lb ft 37.7mpg, 174g/km CO₂ 00–62mph in 5.8secs, 158mph 1280kg £ £36,430/£38,445 **Total mileage** 8104 **Driver** Ollie Marriage Why it's here Can you live with the most hardcore hot hatch?

GOODBYE 1499cc, 3cyl turbo petrol, 4WD, 357bhp, 420lb ft 134.5mpg, 49g/km CO₂ 00-62mph in 4.4secs, 155mph 1490kg £ £99,845/£105,825 Total mileage 24,017 Driver Ollie Marriage Why it's here Is this the future of the sports car?

F

or two of our Garage cars, last month's Speed Week extravaganza was more than a test of handling ability and driver entertainment. For

the BMW i8 and Megane RenaultSport Trophy-R, this was also a farewell tour, a last grand blast across Europe before they left us.

This should have been a traumatic experience – albeit for very different reasons. I was dreading the Megane as a 1,000-mile companion, and dreading saying goodbye to the i8. Personally (and I know its usual keeper, Charlie Turner, would agree with me), I think it might just be the finest car we've ever run.

So I decided to take one for the team and start in the snack truck. Yep, the absence of rear seats and the presence of a handy roll cage from which to dangle carrier bags, meant the Megane's capacious boot was loaded with an army supply train's worth of Quavers and Twix. Which is the plural of Twix.

Belgium was unpleasant, because the road surfaces are awful. Belgium consisted of nothing but rustling crisp packets, flapping harnesses and roaring tyres. But aside from that, and the rubbish nav/infotainment system (which has been a daily let-down since the car









Pit stop to raid the food stores and replenish the fuel. Both do over 300 miles on a tank

arrived), the Megane was far more comfortable than it had any right to be. The ride was good and wind noise wasn't excessive.

It is not, however, a car into which you should insert the wife/girlfriend. She would not find the harnesses appropriate. Boy's road trip only. Unlike the i8, which, to be honest, deals with this sort of thing with the aplomb of a Bentley Conti GT. Only returning 35.6mpg. Yep, better than the Megane.

It's sublime, the i8. It soaks up distance, has a stunning cabin, hasn't put a foot wrong in nine months (although our dealer experience wasn't great), and when it got to the Red Bull Ring, pounded around two seconds faster than the Megane. That was mostly down to the power advantage – around corners, it was the Trophy-R that had the more feel and generated more grip (1.27 lateral g plays 1.15).

It was the first time the Megane had properly got under our skin. The drive out may have been more pleasant than expected, but this car thrives on a circuit. The i8? You might be thinking of buying a Porsche 911 or AMG GT, but do yourself a favour and don't do so without seeing if the i8 is for you. It goes a long way to convincing you the world is a better place. It's hard to put a price on that.



GOOD STUFF

▲ Sounds good, goes hard, chassis is a belter. Proper hot-hatch hero

BAD STUFF

▼ Brakes were squeaky before we even got to the Red Bull Ring

MILEAGE AND MPG THIS MONTH

0 0 3 1 2 2

GARAGE LOGBOOK BMW i8

GOOD STUFF

▲ Just about everything. Last nine months have been a privilege

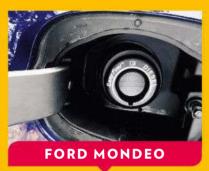
BAD STUFF

▼ Um. There's a real knack to getting in and out deftly

MILEAGE AND MPG THIS MONTH

0 0 2 8 7 2





Sizing up

ars, generally, are getting bigger. Trace the Mondeo's bloodline back a little more than 30 years, to the last

of the Cortinas, and you'll find a car which is shorter and narrower than a modern-day Focus.

Our Mondeo wagon is therefore much bigger than its predecessors – in fact, it's the same width and only 4cm shorter than the benchmark in large estates –the Mercedes-Benz E-Class. The Merc does, to be fair, have a considerably bigger boot, but the point is that a modern-day Mondeo is a big old barge with plenty of space as a result.

I'm enjoying it being part of the family and constantly finding little touches that make me smile. I know it's not exactly new but the Easy Fuel feature does away with the fuel filler cap and prevents misfuelling your diesel car with petrol. It's only a small thing, but why don't all cars have this?

REPORT 2

- 1997cc, 4cyl, FWD, 176bhp, 295lb ft
- 56.5mpg, 130g/km CO₂
- © 0–62mph in 8.7secs, 135mph
- **1703kg £** £27,165/£33,510

Total mileage 1180
Driver Adam Waddell
Why it's here Is Ford's family favourite
still a sensible family choice?



REPORT 5 5204cc, V10, AWD, 602bhp, 413lb ft 22.6mpg, 290g/km CO₂ 0-62mph in 3.2secs, 202mph 1422kg £ £180,720 **Total mileage** 12,578

Driver Charlie Turner **Why it's here** Is this the first Lambo you can use day-to-day?



onth two living with a Lambo on a daily basis, another few thousand miles on the clock, and two things are becoming increasingly clear.

First: it is more than possible to use a modern supercar as your daily driver without losing either your mind or your posture. Even if your commute is a 100-mile round trip that involves an hour's crawl through London traffic at one end. Something that you would have struggled to say about previous Lamborghinis. Which means that for all those who thought Audi's influence might be perniciously Germanic, there is obvious practical method in the madness.

Second: it's hard to think of a car that has ever received such unanimous appreciation, thumbs up and general love. In fact, it has such a profound effect on people that I'm starting to regard every journey as some sort of public service. So, if you were one of the people who worried that Audi's influence might have eroded the Sant'Agata drama, then fear not.

An example? Recently I collected my son from his cricket club, and the Huracán was immediately mobbed by jabbering 10-year-olds. Amid the crowd was one very distraught-looking mother. When I asked what was the matter, she said her son had been coming to cricket every week on the off chance the Lambo would show up, and would be gutted he'd missed it. So I did the only thing any public-spirited temporary Lamborghini owner would do, and offered to drive it to their house. I honestly think the Huracán turning up on that lad's drive has inspired a future engineer, car designer or (God forbid)

IN DETAIL







Practical, reliable and usable almost every day... Not something you'd say about most supercars journalist. If he can get over his temporary speechlessness, that is.

I may have mentioned it before, but I have to constantly pinch myself at the opportunities afforded to me in this job – and nothing makes the privilege more apparent than the effect certain cars have on the population. They are more than mere cars, they're little events that brighten people's days and inspire future generations of petrolheads. Turns out no one does drama and inspiration better than Lambo.

Beyond its services to the public good, every journey has proved lightly effortless. With the V10 providing 75 per cent of the 413 torques from just 1,000rpm, it's an amiable companion just mooching. Albeit one where you always know you have serious power available should you need it. This is going to be a hard one to give back...

GARAGE LOGBOOF HURACÁN

GOOD STUFF

▲ The Lambo turns 90% of the people who see it into momentary petrolheads

▲ It's surprisingly practical. A recent trip to the airport saw the car swallow all my luggage with ease

BAD STUFF

A low oil light is not what you want flashing up on a 5.2-litre V10, but a quick stop, much consultation of the manual, the removal of the rear engine cover and the addition of half a litre of very pricey oil sorted it out

MILEAGE AND MPG THIS MONTH

0 0





20







Full frontal

he Twingo's engine is, as you'll have gathered, in its rear. So that leaves plenty of space under the front bonnet for shopping bags and naughty children, right? Wrong.

Unlike the rear-engined 911, which has a front boot fit for even a medium-sized Stig, the Twingo's nose offers no storage of any kind. Just getting under the front bonnet is a challenge, requiring the twisting of bits of plastic that really don't feel like they should be twisted. When you're finally in, you'll find many tubes and bits of plastic no doubt integral to the operation of a city car, but exactly no room for your weekly Lidl run. You could, at a push, stuff a couple of slices of prosciutto down the side of the coolant reservoir, but that's your lot.

Thankfully, with the engine tucked down below the boot floor, there's enough room behind the rear seats for all your sensibly priced shopping needs...

REPORT 4

- 898cc, 3cyl turbo petrol, RWD, 89bhp, 100lb ft
- 65.7mpq, 99q/km CO₂
- © 0-62mph in 10.8secs, 103mph
- 943kg £ £12,595/£13,765

Total mileage 3101 **Driver** Sam Philip Why it's here Is this the best city car on the market?



REPORT 6 Rolls-Royce EJ200 turbofan, Nammo hybrid rocket, 47,700lb thrust 📦 200 litres of jet fuel and 800 litres of rocket fuel per run 00–1000mph in 42.0secs, 1050mph max 🛎 7750kg Weeks to go 22 Run by Mark Chapman Why it's here It's Bloodhound SSC...

t's the nature of a project like Bloodhound SSC, featuring 3,000 bespoke components and targeting unprecedented speeds, that we will experience parts delays. So if you've noticed the 'Weeks to go' ticker in the panel above has grown since last month, that's sadly no mistake. We're now aiming to test on the Newguay Airport runway in November, rather than August as originally planned.

This has a knock-on effect on next year's desert runs, of course, and we've taken the decision not to rush out to South Africa for the end of the dry season at the start of 2016, but instead wait until later in the year. The delay has been caused by the rocket fuel impeller bearing (see issue 269 & 270), which needed to be redesigned, which meant we missed our rocket-test window. It's disappointing, but we have to get the engineering right.

One component that is up to scratch is the braking parachute. This month we've been testing the release mechanism by jettisoning the 'chute from a 180mph Jaguar F-Type R, powered by the same 542bhp V8 that'll spin our rocket fuel pump.

If that doesn't sound too taxing for a system tasked with slowing an eight-tonne car from around 650mph (after the airbrakes have done their stuff) then think again. It's actually more difficult for our parachute to operate at 'slow' speeds, sub-200mph, as there's less airstream for the droque 'chute to latch onto and unfurl the big canopy.

We're using a mechanical release mechanism - cable operated by Andy from the cockpit - as the electrical release used in









Thrust SSC had the same parachute. There's nothing like a bit of recycling in a complex project...

current land-speed champion Thrust SSC was plaqued by reliability issues caused by the vibration and heat from breaking the sound barrier on the Black Rock Desert. Andy Green actually missed out on the record on an earlier attempt, when SSC's parachutes stubbornly stayed put and he overshot its braking zone. It's a great example of a lesson learned from the last time the LSR was set, being applied to Bloodhound SSC almost 20 years later.

Twenty runway blats later, our elegantly simple mechanism is still functioning perfectly - as is the 'chute itself, which is the very one that stopped Thrust SSC back in 1997, and still has the Nevada dust inside to prove it. Parachutes don't deteriorate if stored in a cool, dark place. It ain't broke. So we're not fixing it. One less job to do, then...

BLOODHOUND SSC

GOOD STUFF

▲ The simplified parachute mechanism has passed its first tests without breaking sweat. The obvious answer is the best answer

First pieces are back from the paint shop. Look terrific

BAD STUFF

▼ We've had to push back the dates for our first test, but we're still on track to get the car moving under its own power by the end of 2015

MILEAGE AND MPG THIS MONTH



GOODBYE — Electric motor, FWD, 88bhp, 162lb ft 🕦 n/a mpg, Og/km CO2 🧿 0–62mph in 13.5secs, 84mph 🐞 1468kg £ £20,043 Total mileage 3868 Driver Jason Barlow Why it's here Can a family live with a pure electric vehicle?

o it turns out there's a burgeoning EV community spirit. Loads of 'users' have been in touch about the TG Zoe, and the dialogue is

more progressive than gesticulating at a fellow Beetle driver with a plastic flower in the dashtop vase. So much so, we thought we'd wrap up our reports on Renault's brilliant little electric car with a few enlightening case studies.

"The Zoe replaced my wife's 11-year-old Micra, which was going to need a new clutch, new tyres and a service, and was costing £85pm," says TG reader Nick Appleton. "The Zoe's design grabbed me first, and I was pleasantly surprised by the way it drove. The interactive app is good, with the remote cabin pre-heating function. My wife runs it all week on a single charge and it costs the princely sum of £2.40."

Nick also proves that going EV doesn't automatically equate to hairshirt. "I opted out of my company-car scheme, and replaced my rather dull BMW 320d with a Nissan Leaf, so we have two electric cars for daily use. But I put some of my allowance towards a Porsche 996 C2, and I have an early MX-5 track-day car for blowing away the cobwebs...

Not only do we approve, we also suspect that this 'mixed economy' approach is the likely way forward as the tech matures and

IN DETAIL







The Renault badge hinges away for charger access. Nice detail. As is its blue lacquer finish, until it starts peeling off...

the infrastructure improves. EV for everyday use, ICE for the weekend.

Seth Trotman's experience backs this up. "I'm not an eco warrior - my main motivation was running costs," he says. "My VW Up was cheap to run, but this is on another level. The home charger has cost £75 in electricity from November to May. The Up cost me £100 a month in petrol alone.

"My fiancée has a Skoda Octavia vRS, and we do all the local stuff in the Zoe and the Octavia for long trips. We used the Zoe on multiple trips to Silverstone this year for the WEC and Britcar 24 races. So that's 65 miles from M5 J2 to Cherwell Valley services, then a rapid charge for 25mins and on to Silverstone. In other words, it works if you plan your stops using the Ecotricity highway, have time to stop and peg your speed to 70mph."

Clever use and forward planning have helped both Nick and Seth circumvent the EV's biggest bugbear: range anxiety. "It was a concern on longer trips, but I don't worry now," Seth says. "If the rapid charger is broken and I can't make it to a charging point, Renault will come and pick the car up. The Zap Map app is good for charger locations. None of my long trips could be done without Ecotricity's rapid chargers. My dad thinks it runs on witchcraft!"

He's not alone. But think of the Zoe as a mini Tesla Model S. and dive in.

GOOD STUFF

In mixed driving, Zoe is easily grunty enough to worry hot hatches. Less cop on the motorway, but spirited and fun most of the time

Charge it up overnight, and the 7kW wall box will replenish the batteries for roughly £1.50

BAD STUFF

▼ Ride on 17in alloys is far from supple. Zoe is a chubby 1,468kg thanks to batteries, and its damping isn't French-car soft

▼ Though it's fundamentally well made, some of the fixtures and fittings could be more robust

MILEAGE AND MPG THIS MONTH















Key role

Il cars come with two sets of keys – but the Hellcat is different. Instead of two identical sets, you're given one black key and one red.

The black clef restricts the s'charged 6.2-litre engine to just 500bhp. The red one gives you everything it's got, 707bhp.

So do you take the black key and keep it sensible, or do you grab the red one and revel in every second of that absurd shove. It's a no contest for me – why buy a 700bhp muscle car and choke it?

But that doesn't stop me from playing with the settings in the very excellent and easy to use SRT Performance Pages in the car's brain. Accessed via the SRT button on the lower console, or via scrolling through the on-screen menu.

After some in-depth experimentation, my day-to-day hot set-up is 700+bhp, trans in Sport, paddles on, traction in Sport and suspension in Street. That gives you all the power and reaction speed plus all the comfort, too.

REPORT 2

- 6166cc, V8, RWD, 707bhp, 650lb ft
- 15.6mpq, n/a q/km CO₂
- 00-62mph in 3.9secs, 199mph
- **2**013kg **£** \$60,990/\$65,695

Total mileage 3110
Driver Pat Devereux
Why it's here What's it like to live with a 700+bhp muscle car?



GOODBYE ● 1598cc, 4cyl turbodiesel, AWD, 128bhp, 236lb ft ● 53.3mpg, 139g/km CO₂ ○ 0–62mph in 11.0secs, 116mph ● 1615kg € £28,995/£30,245 **Total mileage** 12,521

Driver Andy Franklin **Why it's here** Is this the next logical step after the Qashqai?

I

t is with a heavy heart that I say goodbye to *TG*'s Nissan X-Trail this month. This car has been a real success and also a hit in the Franklin

family. In fact, I'd almost go as far as saying it's been one of the best cars I've run over the last 12 years, although some of the reasoning behind that is because of my current family situation, which consists of having two young kids and lots and lots of stuff. That said, I think great praise needs to be given to Nissan for taking what was a boxy and undesirable car and turning it into a competitor to Land Rover and Ford alike. Yes, it isn't perhaps the most dynamic of cars to drive but you probably wouldn't be looking at an X-Trail if B-road thrills were your top priority. But why has it been a great family car?

First, it looks great. We wouldn't even consider the last generation purely for its dull, cheap and boxy looks. This one is smarter-looking and has a more premium feel.

Second, it has ample space for a family of four and all their kit. We found we could easily have a double pushchair in the boot and room for plenty of other stuff, especially if you use all the hidden storage areas. The interior isn't a thing of beauty - it's been designed to resist family treatment, off-road jaunts and everyday abuse. Nissan goes to great lengths to say that this car can withstand the onslaught of children, and while some of this is true, it does feel after 12,500 miles that it's showing signs of wear the boot carpet for one being rather thin and the odd stain and scratch that you'd think wouldn't show. We opted for the extra two seats, which have come in handy on more than one occasion. For an extra £700, it's an option

IN DETAIL









Bar the weak engine, the X-Trail has turned out to be an ideal family wagon for the Franklins

you must tick, as they take up very little space in the boot due to the clever design.

Third, this car does 4x4 very well. In an earlier report, we put it through its paces at the Yarwell off-road centre, and Nissan's i4x4 was considered more than a match for Land Rover's Discovery Sport and is certainly not a soft off-roader like its young Qashqai brother.

Fourth, it's economical. I was often getting 45mpg but the trade-off for this was a very slow and weak 1.6-litre engine, which could just about cope. The engine in the X-Trail is without doubt its weakest point and often frustrating.

Last, it is great value. For the size, space, options (including metallic paint, great alloys, seven seats, satnav, 4x4) and level of quality, £30k, in my mind, is good value. We set out to see if the X-Trail is the next logical step to the Qashqai. It is without doubt better than that.

GARAGE LOGBOOK N-TEC dC<u>i</u> 130

GOOD STUFF

▲ It's been a real hit with the kids and a brilliantly practical family car

A Reaction to its looks was positive and people seemed surprised what it was when they found out

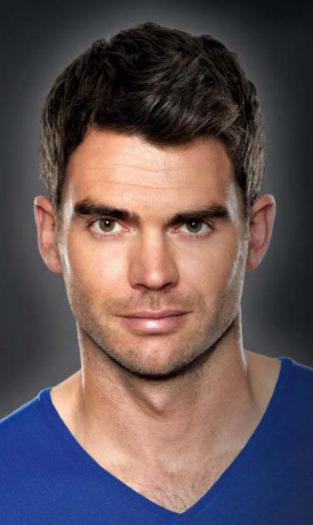
BAD STUFF

▼ After 12,500 miles, the engine never really loosened up or got any nicer to use

▼ Interior electric boot button is so cheap, the plastic warps with car movement and disables it

MILEAGE AND MPG THIS MONTH

0 0 1 9 0 1



James Anderson

England's No.1 wicket taker of all time*

"Wellman" has helped my energy release, stamina and focus during long matches. Since using this supplement, I feel fantastic thanks to Vitabiotics!" James

Wellman[®] is an advanced range of nutritional products, tailored to the specific requirements of men.

It has helped world renowned **Test Bowler James Anderson** so whether you are playing or not, why not see what it can do for you?

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face scrub



ALSO AVAILABLE

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moisturiser

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Nutrient Skin Therapy available from[†] & www.wellman.co.uk

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TOPGEAR

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT **BUYING NEW CARS** PRODUCED BY RESEARCH

VOLKSWAGEN

HOW IT WORKS

Quietly brilliant, thoroughly deserving of every accolade chucked its way. Up and Golf particular highlights.

I GOLF

The best done better than ever. You need no other hatchback. So don't waste your time looking.



		PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.4 ACT GT		£23,850	8.4	131	140	184	58.9	112	8/10
2.0 GTI 5d	6	£27,235	6.5	153	220	258	47.1	139	8/10
2.0 GTD 5d	920	£26,670	7.5	143	184	258	67.3	109	8/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4260x1800x1450, 50-litre fuel tank, 380/1270-little boot, 12 engines, 8 trims, 29 models in total.

- TG SPEAKS Our verdict on the brand
- SOME WORDS... ..about the car
- **3** YELLOW BAR Denotes the TG Favourites
- **4** FUEL ECONOMY Less is. um. more

- **69 MODEL CHOICE** lust the ones that count
- CRASH TESTING You want five stars here
- **®** BOOT VOLUME Two numbers? Seats up/down
- NOT EVERY ENGINE is available with every trim!

NEW IN THIS MONTH

Mazda MX-5 p161



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING

£18.495 8.3 127 131 111 47.1 139



Renault Kadjar p166



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING £19.895 11.9 113 112 192 74.3 99





TopGear on Alfa Romeo: The best badge in the business, now worn by two hatches and a sports car that divides opinion. History repeating?



Lotus by Alfa, with the odd Alfa foible to boot. But when a car's this pretty, light and engaging, you just want one.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 RATING £51,500 4.5 160 240 258 41.5 157 5/10 1.7T Coupe 1.7T Spider £59,500 4.5 160 240 258 41.5 157 5/10

Euro NCAP N/A, LxWxH in mm: 3989x1864x1183, 40-litre fuel tank, 110-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 2 models in total.

Alfa's small car is actually quite big, except on the inside. Yes, it's the Mini all over again, but worse to drive.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 1.4 170 QV £20,300 7.3 136 172 185 52.3 124 4/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4060x1820x1540, 45-litre fuel tank, 270/950-litre boot, 5 engines, 4 trims, 11 models in total.

GIULIETTA

Another pizza slice from Fiat's Taste The Difference range. It's no Golf, which is why you want it, and also why you don't.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 2.0 JTDM-2 £21,930 8.8 130 150 280 67.3 110

Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 4350x1800x1460, 60-litre fuel tank, 450-litre boot, 7 engines, 6 trims, 15 models in total.

TopGear on Ariel: Artfully shaped metalwork containing frenzied engines and a man clinging on for dear life. Hectic, addictive.

The single most insane car on sale. Even the regular version will redefine your sense of what's possible in a car.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 2.0 245 £32,255 3.2 141 245 154 N/A N/A 9/10 £64,800 2.5 155 330 243 N/A N/A 9/10

Euro NCAP N/A, LxWxH in mm: 3410x1800x1200, 42-litre fuel tank, N/A-litre boot, 3 engines, 1 trim, 3 models in total.

TopGear on Aston Martin: Achingly cool cars that make up in beauty and charisma what they lack in technical and dynamic ability.

VANTAGE

The car that took on the 911. And lost. But it's an Aston, which means brogues to the Porsche's two-a-penny trainers.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 4.7 V8 N430 £94,995 4.8 189 430 361 20.4 321 7/10 6.0 V12 S £138,995 3.7 205 573 458 17.2 388

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4380x1870x1260, 80-litre fuel tank, 300-litre boot, 4 engines, 5 trims, 9 models in total

Actually a blend of DB9 and now-defunct Virage. Not without charm, but, really Aston, it's time for some new ideas.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 £133,495 4.6 183 517 457 19.8 333 7/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4710x1880x1270, 80-litre fuel tank. 175-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 2 models in total

Overhauled DBS is another evolutionary step from Aston and is likely to struggle to broaden the customer base.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
V12 Coupe	£195,950	3.8	201	576	465	22.1	298	8/10
V12 Volante	£207,950	4.0	197	576	465	22.1	298	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4692x1912x1294, 78-litre fuel tank, 368-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 2 models in total.

Aston has ensured the latest Rapide is, err, rapid-er by giving it the engine from the latest Vanquish. Better than ever.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
6.0 V12	£147,950	4.4	203	560	465	21.9	300	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5019x1929x1360, 90.5-litre fuel tank 317/886-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

TopGear on Audi: Aspirational premium brand is inventing so many niches, if there's not one for you today, there will be by tomorrow.

Essentially a posh Fabia, the A1 is prince to Skoda's pauper. Or maybe the emperor's new clothes. Either way, it's not £20k good.



Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 3973x1740x1416, 45-litre fuel tank, 270/920-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 14 models in total.

New A3 old looks But new bits underneath and a really rather lovely cabin.
Slight naffness standard with every model.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.4 TFSI Sport	£21,275	9.2	128	125	147	55.4	117	6/10
e-tron	£29,950	7.6	138	204	258	177.6	37	8/10
S3	£30,940	5.2	155	300	280	40.4	162	7/10
2.0 TDI Sport	£23,575	8.6	134	150	236	68.9	106	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4230x1770x1420, 45-litre fuel tank, 365/1,100-litre boot, 10 engines, 6 trims, 70 models in total.

DATA IN NUMBERS: PLUG-IN ECONOMY

- → Fuel range, fully-charged A3 e-tron 584 miles
- → Time to fully charge an A3 e-tron Four hours

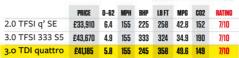
Competence is overrated. And here's the proof. Yep, the A4 has all the quality and image you crave, but it's a bit... cold



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.8 TFSI SE Tech	£27,300	8.1	143	170	236	49.6	134	6/10
3.0 TFSI 333 S4	£39,610	5.0	155	333	324	34.9	190	6/10
RS 4 Avant	£56,555	4.7	155	450	317	26.4	249	7/10
2.0 TDI ultra	£29,620	8.3	140	163	293	67.3	109	6/10
3.0 TDI q' Av'	£39,550	6.1	155	245	368	47.9	154	6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4700x1830x1420, 65-litre fuel tank, 480/962-litre boot, 11 engines, 5 trims, 53 models in total.

An artful lesson in understatement, Audi's A5 does desirable without the flash, Unless you spec it in white with 20s. Fool.

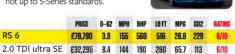


Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4630x1860x1370, 65-litre fuel tank, 455/829-litre boot, 8 engines, 5 trims, 45 models in total.

A6

Audi's photocopier styling department has pulled another one out the bag. Still not up to 5-Series standards

3.0 BiTDI SE Av' £48.515 5.2 155 320



Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4910x1870x1460, 65-litre fuel tank, 535/1680-litre boot, 8 engines, 6 trims, 23 models in total.

DATA IN NUMBERS: HORSES V LITRES

- → Audi RSA hhn 580
- \rightarrow Audi RS6 boot space, litres 565

Audi's niche-busting continues. The A7 is basically an A8 hatch, with the added suggestion that you might drive yourself



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	CO2	RATING
RS 7	£84,485	3.9	155	560	516	29.7	221	7/10
3.0 TDI BITDI	£56,575	5.2	155	320	479	46.3	162	7/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4970x1911x1420, 73-litre fuel tank, 535/1390-litre boot, 6 engines, 5 trims, 13 models in total.

Will the A8 ever escape the S-Class's shadow? Probably not, but then on this evidence, it doesn't deserve to



479 45.6 164

	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
W12	£98,110	4.6	155	500	461	25.0	264	6/10
4.2 TDI SE Exec	£72,795	4.7	155	385	626	38.2	194	6/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5135/5270x1949x1460, 90-litre fuel tank, 520-litre boot, 5 engines, 6 trims, 17 models in total

It won't chase away the old stereotypes but the all-new TT is a big step forward. Interior is genuinely cool.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING	
2.0 TFSI Sport	£29,915	6.0	155	230	273	46.3	141	8/10	
2.0 TDI ultra	£29,810	7.1	150	184	280	62.8	116	8/10	
Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4177x1832x1353, 50-litre fuel									

tank, 305/712-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 14 models in total.

No V8, no manual, only a faint restyle: Has Audi dropped a difficult second album clanger? We'll find out soon.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
5.2 V10	£119,500	3.5	200	540	398	23.9	275	TBA
5.2 V10 Plus	£137,500	3.2	205	610	413	22.8	289	TBA

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4470x1240x1940, TBA-litre fuel tank, TBA-litre boot, 2 engines, 2 trims, 2 mo

This is the car Audi says rivals the Range Rover Evoque. Oh dear. A high-rise Golf with an inferiority complex.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
2.0 TDI quattro	£29,280	7.9	136	184	170	53.3	139	6/10
Euro NCAP	9999 Lx	WxH i	n mm	: 4385	x1831	(1608,	64-lit	re fuel

tank, 420/1325-litre boot, 4 engines, 3 trims, 15 models in total

Audi's 'small' SUV is only small because the Q7 is the size of sub-Saharan Africa. It's small inside though, if that helps.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING	
SQ5	£44,785	5.1	155	313	479	41.5	179	7/10	
2.0 TDI q' SE	£32,695	8.4	130	190	295	49.6	148	5/10	

Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 4630x1880x1650, 75-litre fuel tank, 540/1560-litre boot, 6 engines, 3 trims, 16 models in total.

About time too. New O7 smaller on the outside, bigger where it matters. Margin ally less offensive, too. Maybe.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
3.0 TDI 272 SE	£50,340	6.3	145	272	442	49.5	149	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5053x1963x1730, 100-litre fuel tank. 295/2075-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

TopGear on BAC:

A car so good to drive that you'll need to take everyone you know out for a ride in it. Oh, wait...

Some say it's too extreme. All we know is that Stig once voted it his car of the year. And that some people are fools.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
2.3 280	£80,000	2.8	170	280	206	N/A	N/A	9/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 3952x1800x1110, 35-litre fuel tank, NA-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.



The third generation TT. The critics' first choice.

Business users only with Contract Hire.[^]

Official fuel consumption figures for the Audi TT Coupé Sport 2.0 TDI ultra 184PS manual in mpg (I/100km): Urban 54.3 (5.2), Extra Urban 70.6 (4.0), Combined 62.8 (4.5). CO2 emissions: 116g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

TopGear on Bentley: Big cars favoured by many footballists. The cars are more genteel than their clientele. Yes, even the GT3-R.

CONTINENTAL GT

Way better than the David Dickinson image would suggest, the Conti GT is a masterclass in modern British style.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	CO2	RATING
4.0 V8 S	£149,800	4.5	192	521	502	26.8	246	8/10
4.0 V8 GT3-R	£238,665	3.6	170	580	517	22.3	295	7/10
6.0 W12 Speed	£168,300	4.2	206	635	605	19.5	338	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4800x1920x1400, 90-litre fuel tank. 358-litre boot, 5 engines, 5 trims, 9 models in total.

FLYING SPUR

Brilliant in many ways, but somehow fails to capture the essence of luxury as well as the Conti coupe.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
4.0 V8	£142,800	4.9	183	507	487	25.9	254	6/10
6.0 W12	£153,300	4.3	200	625	590	19.0	343	6/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5299x1976x1488, 90-litre fuel tank, 475-litre boot, 2 engines, 2 trims, 4 models in total

MULSANNE

The replacement for the Arnage, and every bit as opulent and grand. If yo can ignore the looks, this is brilliant.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
6.75 V8	£229,360	5.1	184	512	752	16.8	393	7/10
Fura NCAD	/a LyMyL	i i	EET	70-103	0v1E2	0 06 1	itua fii	al tank

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5570x1930x1530, 96 443-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

i cars good, 2-Series Active Tourer bad. We'll leave you to put the rest of BMW's range on the swing-o-meter.



The future is here, its electric and we love it. The rest are now playing catch up. From a long way behind.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
i3 EV	£30,980	7.2	93	170	184	n/a	0	8/10
i3 EV REx	£34,130	7.9	93	170	184	470	13	9/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3999x11775x1578, 9-litre fuel tank(REx), 260-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 8 models in total

I 1-SERIES



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
116d ED+ 3d	£22,030	10.4	121	116	191	83.1	89	7/10
120d SE 5d	£25,305	7.1	142	190	295	65.7	114	7/10
M135i M Spt 3d	£30,835	5.1	155	326	332	35.3	188	9/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4329x1765x1421, 50/52-litre fuel tank, 360/1200-litre boot, 11 engines, 6 trims, 54 models in total.



CO2 13a/km

Price £34130 **Specs** 170bhp, 184lb ft, 0-62mph 7.9secs, VMax 93mph, 470mpg,

The first all-electric BMW available to the masses. BMW-y drive, clever interior, and the option of a tiny motorbike engine to extend the range. It's brilliant.



Price £104,540 **Specs** 372bhp, 421lb ft, 0-62mph 4.4secs, VMax 155mph, 113mpg, CO2 49a/km

A hybrid that can also go toe-to-toe with a Porsche 911? That'll be the i8. Stunning design, amazing powertrain and just so intoxicating to live with. The future's here.



Price £34.995 **Specs** 150bhp, 272lb ft, 0-62mph 8.7secs, VMax 99mph. 235mpg, CO2 27g/km

The best of both worlds? Petrol-electric range extender solves traditional EV limitations and offers emissionsfree motoring around town. Pricey, mind



VW E-GOLF

Price £30,845 **Specs** 115bhp, 199lb ft, 0-62mph 10.4secs, VMax 87mph, NAmpg, CO2 Oq/km

Looks like a Golf, feels like a Golf, drives like a Golf Only more silently and with a bit of range anxiety. Electricity takes a step into the mainstream.



Price £26.490 **Spees** 109bhp, 206lb ft, 0-62mph 11.9secs, VMax 90mph, n/a mpg, CO2 n/a g/km

All-electric hatch proves the era of battery-only motoring is getting closer, but limited range means this won't be your only family car... yet

2-SERIES

2-Series follows BMW's new naming strategy, but is very much its own ca And a rather good one at that.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
220i Sport	£26,195	7.0	146	184	199	44.8	148	7/10
220d Sport	£27,015	7.2	143	184	280	58.9	125	7/10
M235i	£34,540	5.0	155	326	332	34.9	189	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a LxWxH in mm: 4432x1774x1418, 52-litre fuel tank, 390-litre boot, 5 engines, 3 trims, 10 models in total.

2-SERIES ACTIVE TOURER

BMW builds an MPV, but stupidly still quotes a Nürburgring time for it. First FWD BMW misses the point entirely.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
218i SE	£22,475	9.2	127	136	162	57.6	115	5/10
218d SE	£24,555	9.1	129	150	243	68.9	109	5/10
F NCAD				. 4242	1000	.1555	F4 154	

tank, 468-1510-litre boot, 6 engines, 4 trims, 23 models in total.

3-SERIES

Not only the benchmark small exec, but one of the best saloons of all. More versions are out now, all are excellent



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
335i M Sport	£38,265	5.5	155	306	295	35.7	186	8/10
M3	£56,595	4.3	155	431	406	32.1	204	8/10
320d ED Busi'	£30,175	8.0	143	163	280	68.9	109	9/10
320d xDrive SE	£30,975	7.5	145	184	280	57.6	128	9/10
330d xDrive M	£38,605	5.3	155	258	413	54.3	137	9/10

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4620x1810x1430, 57/60-litre fuel tank, 480-litre boot, 10 engines, 7 trims, 66 models in total.

4-SERIES

The name may have changed but the game's still the same. Smooth, genteel, refined and sport-ish.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
428i SE	£33,520	5.9	155	245	258	42.8	154	8/10
435i M Sport	£42,370	5.4	155	306	295	35.8	185	8/10
M4	£57,055	4.3	155	431	406	32.1	204	7/10
420d SE	£32,495	7.3	149	190	295	67.3	111	8/10
420d SE xDr' GC	£33,995	7.7	147	190	295	61.4	121	7/10

Euro NCAP n/a LxWxH in mm: 4638x1825x1362, 57/60-litre fuel tank, 445/480-litre boot, 7 engines, 6 trims, 86 models in total.

5-SERIES

Remains the best exec around thanks to cosseting cabin and ride. Big, smooth and brilliant - why d'you need a 7-Series?



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
535i Luxury	£44,690	5.7	155	306	295	37.7	174	7/10
M5	£73,970	4.3	155	560	501	28.5	232	8/10
520d SE	£32,365	7.9	147	190	295	65.7	114	8/10
530d Tour SE	£43,665	5.9	155	258	413	53.3	139	9/10
535d Lux	£48,920	5.3	155	313	464	52.3	143	8/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4907x1860x1460, 70-litre fuel tank, 520-litre boot, 13 engines, 6 trims, 62 models in total.

Audi Vorsprung durch Technik



The Audi TT Coupé Sport ultra from £359 per month.* Includes:

► Audi Virtual Cockpit
 ► Xenon headlights
 ► 18" alloy wheels
 ► What Car? Best coupé 2015





audi.co.uk/offers

*At the end of the Contract Hire agreement the vehicle and ownership rights will stay with Audi Finance. *Plus VAT and initial rental. Business users only. Based on the Audi TT Coupé Sport 2.0 TDI ultra 184PS manual. Based on 3 years, 10,000 miles per annum. Contract Hire agreement with an initial rental of £2,154.00 (plus VAT), 6.0p (plus VAT) per mile excess mileage charges apply. Offer available for vehicles ordered between 1 July 2015 and 30 September 2015 from participating Centres. Offer may be varied or withdrawn at any time. Further charges may be payable when vehicle is returned, subject to the contract fair wear and tear guidelines and mileage. VAT payable at the prevailing rate. Finance subject to status. Available to 18s and over. Subject to availability. Prices quoted and examples shown are correct at time of publication [July 2015] and do not take into account any variation to government taxes or charges arising after the date of publication. Terms and conditions apply. Freepost Audi Finance.

6-SERIES

Unusually, BMW launched the 6 as a Cabrio first. Also unusually, the coupe's a bit... rubbish. GC 4dr is much better.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
650i Sport Con'	£75,690	4.6	155	450	480	30.7	214	5/10
M6 Coupe	£94,635	4.2	155	560	501	28.5	232	7/10
640d GC SE	£62,295	5.4	155	313	464	50.4	148	8/10
M6 GC	£98,155	4.2	155	560	501	28.5	232	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4890x1890x1370, 70-litre fuel tank. 460-litre boot, 4 engines, 3 trims, 19 models in total

7-SERIES

Never as attractive a proposition as the Merc S-Class, the 7 is phenomenally good without anyone really giving a toss.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
ActiveHybrid 7	£66,200	5.7	155	320	331	41.5	158	5/10
740d SE	£65,465	5.5	155	313	464	49.6	149	7/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5070/5210x1900x1480, 82-litre fuel tank, 500-litre boot, 6 engines, 4 trims, 20 models in total.

74

How does BMW get looks right, but does Boxster kicks it in th

t the Z sn't dr ne tend	4 wro ive rig lers.	ng? I tht. T	t he		pp ded	1	
PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING

E 11615			40					
sDrive28i	£37,390	5.7	155	245	258	41.5	159	7/10
sDrive18i	£21,14U	7.9	13/	154	1//	41.5	159	6/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4240x179 180/310-litre boot, 6 engines, 2 trims, 9

A supercar for spacemen. There's nothing else like it: this is a performance car that makes a Prius look like a gas-guzzler.



PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
£104,540	4.4	155	367	236	134.5	49	9/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4689x1942x1298, 42-litre fuel tank, TBA-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

Far superior to the last one. So much so that you question the need for the X5. X3 is more socially acceptable, too.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
xDrive20d SE	£33,295	8.1	130	190	295	55.4	135	7/10
xDrive35d M Sp'	£45,695	5.3	152	313	465	47.1	157	7/10

Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 4648x1881x1675, 67-litre fuel tank, 550/1600-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 7 models in total

People with the hides of rhinos and a passion for obnoxiousness bought the X6, so we now have to suffer an X4. Joy.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
xDrive2od SE	£36,895	8.0	132	190	295	55.4	135	4/10
xDrive3od XLi'	£45,195	5.8	145	258	413	49.6	149	4/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4671x1915x1624, 67-litre fuel tank, 500/1400-litre boot, 3 engines, 2 trims, 6 models in total



Price £357,875 Specs 453bhp, 531 lb ft, 0-62mph 6.1secs, VMax 150mph, 18.9mpg, CO, 349g/km

So big and smooth, it should probably have sails. And a tiller. And a man at the helm. When it comes to stately speed, nothing does it better than a Rolls.

Price £67,995 Specs 262bhp 458 lb ft, 0-62mph 6.8secs, VMax 155mph, 50.4mpg, CO2 148g/km

It's here, and its even better than we expected. Tech and lux combined to seamless effect (to create TechLux!). Trounces A8 and 7-Series rivals.



BENTLEY MULSANNE

Price £229.360 **Specs** 505bhp, 752 lb ft, 0-62mph 5.3secs, VMax 184mph, 16.8mpg,

Like the wonderful old Arnage it replaces, the big ol' Bentley will show those peasants who's boss. And who cares if it has a slightly piggy nose?



RANGE ROVER LWB

Price £106,250

CO., 393a/km

Specs 339bhp, 517 lb ft, 0-62mph 6.6secs, VMax 135mph, 33.6mpg, CO., 219q/km

New long wheelbase Rangey proves that it is possible to shoot grouse during the day and roll up to a state banquet in the evening, all in the same car.



OUATTROPORTE GTS V8

Price £108,195 **Specs** 523bhp, 479 lb ft. 0-62mph 4.7secs. VMax 191mph, 23.7mpg, CO., 274g/km

The old one was probably the prettiest saloon ever. This one is a touch frumpy, but actually feels better to drive. There's even a V6 option.

Very good on tarmac, assuming you want to pummel it into submission. Just like with those building contracts, yeah?



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	C02	RATING	
M50d	£64,525	5.3	155	381	545	42.8	173	6/10	
xDrive30d SE	£48,850	6.8	142	258	413	47.9	156	7/10	
Euro NCAP n/a. LxWxH in mm: 4896x1938x1762. 85-litre fuel tank.									

650/1870-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 5 models in total.

Top Gear on Bugatti: There's one last Veyron to come. It won't have an Onyx dash or marble pedals. It'll be called the Veyron L.

The fastest, most expensive car in the world (until John Hennessey gets his actogether). Veyron is the ultimate.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
W16 Grand Sp'	£1,139,985	2.5	252	1001	922	10.9	596	10/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4460x1990x1200, 100-litre fuel tank,

TopGear on Caterham: Small, light and nimble 50-year old cars remain all that. But they didn't have to negotiate X6s in 1965.

As old as the hills, yet as energetic as a spring lamb. The small, light, flimsy template still serves the 7 well.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
0.8 160	£18,995	6.9	100	80	79	57.6	114	8/10
2.0 360	£26,995	4.8	130	183	143	n/a	n/a	7/10
R620	£49,995	2.8	155	310	219	n/a	n/a	9/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 3530x1690x1140, 36-litre fuel tank, 75-litre boot, 5 engines, 5 trims, 5 models in total.

TopGear on Chevrolet: If you're looking for Chevrolets such as the Aveo and Cruze, you're reading the wrong magazine.

CAMARO

Brilliant slice of Americana that's some how not as good on the A34 as cruising down Route 66, but we still would.



6.2 V8 Coupe	£35,345	5.2	155	432	419	20.0	329	7/10
Euro NCAP n	/a, LxWxH	l in mi	m: 484	10x192	0x138	0, 72-l	itre fu	iel tank,

320-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 2 models in total.

PRICE 0-62 MPH RHP IRFT MPG CO2

CORVETTE STINGRAY

The Americans have finally got serious about taking on the Porsche 911. Others have tried before, but rarely as well as this.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
6.2 V8	£61,520	<4.0	186	460	465	23.5	279	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4495x1780x1235, TBC-litre fuel tank, TBC-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 2 models in total.

THE NEW BMW 1 SERIES. JRE BMW

With its class-leading efficiency, and near-perfect 50:50 weight distribution for superb agility and performance, the new BMW 1 Series is a driver's car through and through. BMW ConnectedDrive brings the outside world to you. Spotify and 4G capability brings you entertainment and ease of navigation at every turn.

To book your test drive; contact your local BMW Centre.

Official fuel economy figures for the new BMW 1 Series Sports Hatch range: Urban 25.9-72.4 mpg (10.9-3.9 I/100 km). Extra Urban 44.1-91.1 mpg (6.4-3.1 I/100 km).

Top Gear on Citroen:
Design-led brand that's the most 'French' of the French car firms. Undergoing a bit of a renaissance these days.

The first time Citroen got jiggy with Peugeot and Toyota, they created something quite cool. Now it's round two.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.0 Touch 3d	£8,345	14.3	98	69	69	68.9	95	6/10
1.2 Flair 5d	£11,035	11.0	106	83	87	65.7	99	6/10
E 50/01								

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 3460x1620x1430, 35-litre fuel tank, 196/780-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 20 models in total.

C4 CACTUS

Breath of fresh air, as only Citroen can do. Great looking and with just enough gadgets to keep a modern family happy.

	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATINE
1.2 PureT' 75	£12,990	12.9	103	75	87	61.4	105	8/10
1.2 PureT' 110	£15,890	9.3	117	110	151	60.1	107	8/10
1.6 BlueHDi 100	£15,490	10.7	114	100	187	83.1	90	8/10

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 4157x1729x1480, 45-litre fuel tank, 358/1170-litre boot, 6 engines, 3 trims, 13 models in total.

GRAND C4 PICASSO

Funky newness from Citroen, helping make the world of MPVs more accept able. Headlights a particular success.



	IIIOL	0 02		D		0	002	IIIIII
1.6 THP 165	£24,370	8.7	130	155	177	50.4	130	7/10
1.6 e-HDi 115	£22,210	12.1	117	114	199	70.6	105	8/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4590x1830x1630, 60-litre fuel tank, 537/1851-litre boot, 5 engines, 4 trims, 11 models in total.

TopGear on Dacia: Cheap cars from Eastern Europe, via France for a bit of je ne sais quoi, and then on to the budget-conscious.

SANDERO

The UK's cheapest new car – you can lease one for less than a Sky TV package. Nothing here besides simple transport.

					VANIE CO	West Control of the C			
	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING	
1.2 75 Access	£5,995	14.5	97	75	78	47.9	137	6/10	
0.9 TCe 90 Amb	£7,595	11.1	109	90	99	54.3	120	6/10	
1.5 dCi 90 Amb	£8,595	12.1	107	90	162	74.3	99	6/10	

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4060x1730x1520, 50-litre fuel tank, 320/1200-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 7 me

DUSTER

1.5 dCi 4x4 Lau'

Simple, high-riding crossover-style five-seater is a favourite of James May. Good value, surprisingly able, very tough.



£15,495 12,5 104 110

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 4320x1820x1700, 50-litre fuel tank, 475/1636-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 6 models in total.

177 53.3 137

7/10



Rolls-Royce Phantom Coupe 5612mm

Audi A3 Saloon 4456mm



Rolls-Royce Wraith 5269mm

Seat Toledo 4482mm



Mercedes-Benz S-Class Coupe

5027mm





Maserati GranTurismo 4995mm



Mazda 3 4585mm



RMW M6 4898mm



Subaru Impreza WRX STi 4595mm

TopGear on DS: Citroen's new sub-brand will focus on style, tech and luxury Think Lexus. Only French-er.

A former Car of the Year and a gigantic, mincing Gallic leap forward for Citroen. Not fast, but a kick up the arse for Mini.



	PRICE	0-62	МРН	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.2 VTi DSign	£12,865	10.6	114	82	87	62.8	104	7/10
1.6 THP DStyle	£17,790	7.5	135	165	177	50.4	129	7/10
1.6 e-HDi DSt'	£15,820	12.5	113	90	169	78.5	95	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3950x1720x1480, 48-litre fuel tank, 285/880-litre boot, 5 engines, 4 trims, 12 models in total.

Not as good as the DS3, not as cool as the DS5. An awkward middle-child that's best avoided.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	CO2	RATING		
1.2 DSign	£18,695	10.0	123	130	169	55.4	119	TBA		
1.6 BlueHDi DSi'	£19,895	12.2	120	120	236	65.7	100	TBA		
F NCAD	Fund NCAD - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 -									

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4330x1790x1490, 60-litre fuel tank, 410-1185-litre boot, 6 engines, 3 trims, 9 models in total.

DATA IN NUMBERS: DS4 DESIRE?

- → DS4 1.2 PureTech 130 DSign £18.698
- → Nissan Oashqai 1.2 TCe 115 Visia £18.268

DS5

The most avantgarde of all the DS. Not as inspiring as the DS3, and the ride is terrible, but family cars come no cooler



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.6 THP 200	£28,920	8.5	146	200	203	42.2	155	5/10
2.0 HDi DSport	£28,955	8.5	134	160	250	57.6	128	7/10

Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 4530x1870x1540, 45-litre fuel tank, 465-litre boot (Hybrid 325I), 4 engines, 3 trims, 10 models in total.

Top Gear on Ferrari: Art and science blended into the most alluring and diverse supercar range in the company's history.

CALIFORNIA T

The Ferrari that everyone thought was a Maserati now has a turbo V8. Purists will hate it, but it'll bring in buyers.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £154,490 3.6 196 560 556 26.9 250 8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4570x1910x1322, 78-litre fuel tank, 240/340-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

DATA IN NUMBERS: CALIFORNIA DREAM?

- → **Porsche 911 Turbo S Cabrio 5**60bhp, £150,857
- → **Ferrari California T** 560bhp, £154,490
- → Bentley Conti GT V8 S Conv 528bhp, £164,800



Combined 35.3-83.1mpg (8.0-3.41/100 km), CO2 emissions 188-89 g/km. Figures may vary depending on driving style and conditions. *Test drive subject to applicant status and availability.

The finest sports car of the past five years. Utterly mind-blowing. You show want one. Everyone should want one You should



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	CO2	RATING
4.5 V8 Italia	£178,551	3.4	202	562	398	20.6	307	10/10
4.5 V8 Speciale	£208,090	3.0	202	605	398	23.9	275	10/10
4.5 V8 Spider	£198,996	3.4	198	562	398	21.2	307	10/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4580x1940x1210, 86-litre fuel tank, 230-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 3 models in total.

FI2

The F12 is bombastic, epic and howlingly fast. The fastest ever until the LaFerrari came along. Emphatically not just a GT.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
.3 V12	£240,083	3.1	211	740	508	18.8	350	10/10
Fura NCAD a	la LyMyL	in	165	0.10/	10,127	0.02	tro for	ol tople

350-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total

A 4wd Ferrari estate, making this the most practical 208mph family car around. Buy it for the 6.3-litre V12, not the 450-litre boot.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
6.3 V12	£227,167	3.7	208	660	503	18.3	360	9/10
Fura NCAD a	la Ladatal		401	0.104	0.120	0 01 1	f	al tank

450/800-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

LAFERRARI

Meet the most drivable, engaging and friendly 950bhp hypercar you can imagine. Also has electric, but you wouldn't know it.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
6.3 V12 KERS	£1 million	2.9	218+	950	664	19.8	330	10/10

Euro NCAP n/a. LxWxH in mm: 4702x1992x1116. TBC-litre fuel tank, TBC-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

Top Gear on Fiat: Good when they do the small stuff, bad when they go beyond it. Buy a Panda and be content.

It's back, it's slightly rounder and it's still entirely brilliant. Come 'ere cuddly Panda, we want to give you a hug.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
TwinAir 85 Easy	£11,095	11.2	110	85	106	67.3	99	8/10
1.3 MJet Easy	£12,095	12.8	104	75	140	72.4	104	8/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3650x1640x1550, 35-litre fuel tank, 225/870-litre boot, 4 engines, 5 trims, 15 models in total

Not quite the Sixties revival Fiat was angling for, but the 500 is a refreshing alternative to Mini-shaped ubiquity.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.3 MJet Lounge	£14,220	10.7	112	95	150	76.3	97	7/10
0.9 TwinAir S	£13,370	11.0	107	85	106	70.6	92	7/10

Furo NCAP **** XWxH in mm: 3550x1630x1490, 37-litre fuel tank, 185-litre boot, 4 engines, 5 trims, 32 mg

5001

Don't be misled by the badge and the headlights. The 500L is more Panda than 500, and bigger than you expect.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.4 95 Pop	£13,040	12.8	111	95	93	45.6	145	5/10
1.6 MJet Lounge	£19,090	11.3	112	105	236	62.8	117	5/10

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 3550x1630x1490, 37-litre fuel tank, 185-litre boot, 4 engines, 3 trims, 12 models in total.

ABARTH 500

Short on talent, long on appeal, that's the rufty-tufty Abarth. Pogo stick ride but ever so eager with it.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.4 T-Jet 135	£14,560	7.9	127	135	148	43.5	155	7/10
595 1.4 Comp'	£18.990	7.4	130	162	148	43.5	155	7/10

***** LxWxH in mm: 3660x1630x1490, 35-litre fuel tank, 185/610-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 8 models in total.

VAUXHALL CORSA VXR





FORD FIESTA ST

Dear Car Clinic

How good is the Fiesta ST, really? I've decided I need a little hot hatch in my life, and I'm torn between the Fiesta, which everyone seems to love, and the new Corsa VXR. Which one's better? PETER HARRIS, SHREWSBURY

The ST is damn good. It was TG's Car of The Year in 2013, and while at first glance it looks a bit short on power next to the VXR, Mountune will up it to 212bhp for just £600 without invalidating the warranty. The VXR is much improved over the last one - better on track than the Ford. but not quite as good at the everyday stuff. And with the Performance Pack, which you want, it's over £20k. The Fiesta is more fun, more of the time, so it's our choice.

SPECS



/AUXHALL GORSA VXR **Engine** Performance 0-62 in 6.5 secs



ORD FIESTA ST Price Fnaine Performance 0-62 in 6.99

500X

The guest to cash in on the 500 continues Similar lights, but otherwise there's nothing 500-ish here. Not a bad crossover, mind.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.4 MAir P'Star	£17,595	9.8	118	140	170	47.1	139	6/10
1.6 MJet P'Star	£19,095	10.5	116	120	236	68.9	109	6/10
2.0 MJet Cross	£24,095	9.8	118	140	258	51.4	144	6/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4248x1796x1600, 48-litre fuel tank, 350/1000-litre boot, 4 engines, 6 trims, 13 models in total.

TopGear on Ford: Proof that mass market motoring can have an edge. Note: this does not apply to the disappointing EcoSport

Arguably the best supermini on sale. Pace-setter or pacemaker, there's some thing for everyone here.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.0T Zetec 3d	£14,195	11.2	112	100	125	65.7	99	8/10
1.6T 182 ST 3d	£17,545	6.9	139	182	213	47.9	139	9/10
1.5 TDCi Ztec 5d	£16,295	11.9	111	95	159	88.3	82	8/10
Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3950x1720x1480, 42-litre fuel								

tank, 295/979-litre boot, 9 engines, 7 trims, 47 models in total

FOCUS

New engines, new interior design, even a tweak to perk the handling back up. Focus is back to its best.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.0T Zetec	£19,095	11.0	120	125	147	60.1	108	8/10
1.5T Tit' X	£23,820	8.6	130	182	177	51.4	127	8/10
2.0T ST	£22,195	6.5	155	255	250	41.5	159	8/10
1.5 TDCi Zetec	£19,795	10.5	120	120	199	74.3	98	8/10

Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 4358x1823x1484, 53-litre fuel tank, 363/1148-litre boot, 9 engines, 5 trims, 51 models in total.

MONDEO

Been on sale in the US for three years now. Smooth, refined and not too American. Well done Ford.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.6 TDCi Style	£21,095	12.1	119	115	199	78.5	94	7/10
1.5T Zetec	£21,345	9.2	138	160	177	48.7	134	7/10
2.0 TDCi Est Tit'	£25,295	9.5	130	150	258	67.3	109	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4780x1890x1500, 70-litre fuel tank, 540/1460-litre boot, 7 engines, 4 trims, 34 models in total.

B-MAX

Ford's reply to the Vauxhall Meriva. Sliding rear doors and no B-pillars means easy ac-cess and brilliant packaging. Fine car.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.0T Zetec	£15,495	13.2	109	100	125	55.4	119	7/10
1.0T Titanium	£17,295	11.2	117	125	147	57.7	114	8/10
1.6 TDCi Tit	£17,995	13.9	108	95	158	70.6	104	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4080x1860x1600, 48-litre fuel tank, 318/1386-litre boot, 6 engines, 4 trims, 14 models in total

C-MAX

Now with added grille. C-Max gets Ford's new family face and myriad very welcome improvements elsewhere.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.0T Zetec	£19,195	11.4	116	125	125	55.4	117	7/10
2.0 TDCI Ti' Gr'	£24,495	9.8	126	150	273	61.4	119	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4380/4519x1860x1620, 53/60-litre fuel tank, 432/1723-litre boot, 4 engines, 3 trims, 20 models in total.

Second-gen of Ford's low-roofed MPV keeps its dad's fine dynamics, with a much smarter interior



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.5 SCTi Zetec	£24,545	9.9	124	160	177	43.5	149	8/10
2.0 TDCi Zetec	£26,445	10.8	123	150	258	56.5	129	8/10
2.0 TDCi AWD	£32,945	10.5	128	180	295	48.7	149	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4796x1916x1655, 70-litre fuel tank, 285/2200-litre boot, 7 engines, 5 trims, 11 models in total.

GALAXY

Ford's flagship seven-seater offers extra headroom, but is otherwise upstaged by the livelier and more desirable S-Max.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 2.0 TDCi Tit' £29,145 9.5 126 163 250 49.6 152

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4770x1880x1660, 70-litre fuel tank, 285/2000-litre boot, 5 engines, 3 trims, 13 models in total.

The Kuga has grown up and bought some sensible slacks. Sure, it's highly competent, but so are others



PRICE 0-62 MPH RHP ID ET MDC rno DATING 1.5T Titanium £22,645 9.7 121 150 177 45.6 143 6/10 2.0 TDCi AWD £26,345 9.2 126 180 295 54.3 135

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4520x1840x1700, 57-litre fuel tank, 456/1653-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 16 models in total.

MUSTANG

At last, a muscle car to call our own. Mustang now here in right-hand drive, still feels very American. Also large.



PRICE N-62 MPH RHP IRFT MPG CO2 2.3 Ecoboost £28,995 5.8 155 314 320 35.3 179 7/10 5.0 V8 GT £32,995 4.8 155 418 387 20.9 299

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4784x1916x1381, 61-litre fuel tank, TBA-litre boot, 2 engines, 2 trims, 4 models in total.

Top Gear on Ginetta: As seen performing in BTCC support races. Frothy, sparse lightweights now legal for the road. If you must.

Two-seat sports car that's not hugely powerful but feels quick because it weights so little. Short on interior luxuries.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 RATING £29,950 5.8 140 175 140 29 181 TRA

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 3750x1640x1050, 45-litre fuel tank, 200-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

Ginetta bought the stillborn Farbio and re-engineered it. Carbon-bodied G60 isn't cheap, but looks and sounds great



PRICE 0-62 MPH RHP IRFT MPG CO2 RATING 3.7 V6 £68,000 4.9 165 310 288 31 n/a 6/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4220x1940x1050, 80-litre fuel tank, 200-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

Reliable, practical model range that sorely needs the Civic Type-R and NSX fairydust to rekindle the magic.

Individual and ingenious, the Jazz deserves to be bought by more people under ninety than it is.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 1.4 i-VTEC EX £15,995 11.8 113 98 94 50.4 129 7/10

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 3900x1940x1170, 42-litre fuel tank, 335/1320-litre boot, 3 engines, 8 trims, 15 models in total.

Facelift helps add interest to the fading Civic; Type R introduces a rocket into dealerships for guaranteed fireworks.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 2.0 Type R £29,995 5.7 167 310 295 38.7 170 1.6 DTEC Sport £20,820 10.5 129 120 221 76.3 98

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4370x1770x1470, 50-litre fuel tank, 477/1378-litre boot, 4 engines, 6 trims, 25 models in total.

CR-V

A car engineered for accountants. It's a great all-rounder but deeply boring with it. There are few more reliable SUVs.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 RATING 1.6 i-DTEC EX £27,570 9.6 125 160 258 55.4 133 6/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4570x1820x1685, 58-litre fuel tank, 589/1648-litre boot, 3 engines, 4 trims, 11 models in total.

TopGear on Hyundai: Value-packed Korean has earned a proper reputation for capable cars. Excuse us while we tuck into our hats.

Lacks the charisma of the Panda and the sheer polish of the Up! but actually, if you don't care about cars, buy this one.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.0 S	£8,705	14.9	96	66	69	60.1	108	8/10
1.2 SE	£10,270	12.1	106	87	88	57.6	114	8/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3665x1660x1500, 40-litre fuel tank, 252-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 7 models in total.

It's the new i20! It's not that exciting! It needs better engines! Otherwise a very worthy and competent supermini.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.2 S Air	£11,445	13.6	99	75	90	58.9	112	7/10
1.4 SE	£13,325	11.6	114	100	99	51.4	127	7/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4035x1734x1474, 50-litre fuel tank, 301/1042-litre boot, 5 engines, 6 trims, 13 models in total.

1130

Coo, Hyundai seems to be catching up with Kia in the design stakes, and catching up with everyone else everywhere else.





Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4300x1780x1470, 53-litre fuel tank, 378/1316-litre boot, 5 engines, 5 trims, 18 models in total,

Not long ago, a Hyundai would be beige and so would its driver. The stylish i40 has changed all that. Estate is the pick.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.7 CRDi S Tour'	£21,650	10.5	124	141	251	65.7	114	7/10

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4775x1815x1470, 70-litre fuel tank, 553/1719-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 16 models in total.

GENESIS

Like prog rock, a bit of a relic. Over-blown, thirsty and laughably expensive. Fails to rock us: where's the progress?



PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
£47,995	6.5	149	308	293	25.9	261	5/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4990x1890x1480, 73-litre fuel tank, 493-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

IX35

3.8 V6

A weirdly unattractive compact SUV that follows Hyundai's general trend towards being a lot less crap. You could do worse.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 2.0 CRDi 4WD £23,150 11.3 112 136 224 51.4 145

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4410x1820x1660, 58-litre fuel tank, 591/1436-litre boot, 3 engines, 4 trims, 15 models in total.

SANTA FE

Can't afford a Disco? Then step this way, as savvy Santa Fe shows there is another way. Gymkhana mums might not agree.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 2.2 CRDi SE £27995 9.8 118 197 311 46.3 159

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4660x1890x1760, 70-litre fuel tank, 534-litre boot, 1 engine, 3 trims, 5 models in total.

TopGear on Infiniti:
Posh Nissan offshoot desperately aiming to emulate Lexus.
In Europe, we're still struggling to notice. Or care.

More sharply styled but otherwise anony mous saloon from Nissan's lux wing. This time aimed at the BMW 3-Series.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 O50 2.2d SE £28.650 8.5 140 170 295 65.0 114 Q50 Hybrid £40,695 5.2 155 364 402 43.0 144

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4790x1820x1450, 74-litre fuel tank, 400/500-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 8 models in total.

Q70

Refined, classy and quick, but as bland as a Lexus and go carefully with the spec - it's your money you're throwing away



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP IRFT MPG GO2 2.2d Premium £33,400 8.9 137 170 295 57.6 129 6/10 3 5h Premium £43,250 5.3 155 364 403 45.6 145 4/10

> Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4950x1850x1500, 70/80-litre fuel tank, 350/450/500-litre boot, 3 engines, 5 trims, 9 models in total.

A crossover SUV thing that'll separate you from the BMW X3 and Freelander herds. Will anyone ever buy it off you?



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £38,445 7.9 137 235 406 33.2 224

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4650x1800x1500, 80-litre fuel tank, 340/1175-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 5 models in total.

Want to avoid a BMW X6 and associated impressions of drug related violence? The QX70 is an option.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 5.0 V8.5 Prem' £54,750 5.8 155 390 368 21.6 307

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4870x1930x1540, 90-litre fuel tank, 410/1305-litre boot, 3 engines, 4 trims, 9 models in total.

TopGear on Jaguar: Gorgeous Callum design and a raffish demeanor get you so far. Over-powered engines take you the rest of the way.

XE

2

2

Forget the F-Type, this is actually the most important Jaguar of the last decade. Needs to banish all memory of the X-Type. Oops.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
.0T SE	£26,995	7.7	147	200	206	37.7	179	8/10
.0D 180 SE	£30,275	7.8	140	180	317	67.3	109	8/10
.0 V6 S/C S	£44 870	51	155	340	332	34.9	194	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a LxWxH in mm: 4672x1850x1416, 47/56/63-litre fuel tank, 450-litre boot, 5 engines, 5 trims, 14 models in total,

DATA IN NUMBERS: BMW BEATER

→ Jaguar XE 2.0d 163 99g/km CC

→ BMW 320d EfficientDynamics 109g/km CO.

Starting to slip off the pace, but XF is still a judo chop to Jerry's solar plexus. Does luxury, dynamics and dares to be different.



O-62 MPH BHP XFR-S S'brake £82.495 4.6 186 550 502 22.2 297 7/10 2.2D 163 Lux' £33,445 9.8 130 163 295 57.6 129 7/10 3.0D S PL' est £51,995 6.6 155 275 443 46.0 163

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4960x1880x1460, 70-litre fuel tank, 540/923-litre boot, 5 engines, 6 trims, 19 models in total.

Zoinks. The XJ is rapid, refined and just plain beautiful. The interior is so special we invented an award for it.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 XJ L 3.0D Port' £67,870 6.4 155 275 443 47.0 159 XJ L 3.0 SC Por' £73,450 5.7 155 340 332 30.0 224

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5120/5250x1890x1490, 82-litre fuel tank, 520-litre boot, 3 engines, 5 trims, 13 models in total.

F-TYPE

Over-priced Cayman rival, or cut-price 911 alternative? Who cares, when the F-Type is this sodding good?



PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
£60,250	4.9	171	380	339	31.8	213	8/10
£85,025	3.9	186	550	501	25.0	269	8/10
£67,520	4.9	171	380	339	31.0	213	7/10
£79,985	4.3	186	495	460	25.5	259	7/10
	£60,250 £85,025 £67,520	£60,250 4.9 £85,025 3.9 £67,520 4.9	£60,250 4.9 171 £85,025 3.9 186 £67,520 4.9 171	£60,250 4.9 171 380 £85,025 3.9 186 550 £67,520 4.9 171 380	£60,250 4.9 171 380 339 £85,025 3.9 186 550 501 £67,520 4.9 171 380 339	£60,250 4.9 171 380 33.9 31.8 £85,025 3.9 186 550 501 25.0 £67,520 4.9 171 380 339 31.0	£60,250 4.9 171 380 339 31.8 213 £85,025 3.9 186 550 501 25.0 269 £67,520 4.9 171 380 339 31.0 213

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4470x1920x1300, 70-litre fuel tank, 196/315-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 14 models in total.

TopGear on Jeep: Oblong-obsessed 4x4 experts still trading off WWII heroics. Don't mention the Italian and German oily bits underneath.

RENEGADE

Meet the Fiat 500X's Yankee cousin. The styling's a bit yee-hah, but it drives with Euro sophistication, with added fun.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.6 Sport	£16,995	11.9	111	112	112	47.1	141	6/10
1.4 MJet Longi'	£19,795	10.9	112	142	170	47.1	140	6/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4236x1805x1667, 48-litre fuel tank, 351/1356-litre boot, 5 engines, 5 trims, 15 models in total.

CHEROKEE

After a leave of absence, the Cherokee is back to do battle with the Freelander. It's priced well and looks... interesting.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
2.0 CRD 140	£25,495	10.9	116	140	258	53.3	139	6/10
2.0 CRD 170 4x4	£29,995	10.3	119	170	258	48.7	154	6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4623x1859x1669, 60-litre fuel tank, 714/1267-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 6 models in total.

GRAND CHEROKEE

Jeep may be under Fiat's control, but no-one appears to have told the Grand Cherokee. Big, thirsty, pricey.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
6.4 V8 SRT	£60,720	5.0	160	461	460	20.0	328	6/10
3.0 CRD O'land	£46,405	8.2	126	237	405	37.7	198	6/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4820x1940x1760, 93-litre fuel tank, 782/1554-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 5 models in total.

Gear on Kia:

Seven year-warranty-backed range of whitegoods with barely a duffer among 'em. We're as surprised as you are.

PICANTO

A Kia cracker. Latest Picanto looks good, drives well, costs little and is warrantied to the max.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.0 1 3d	£8,345	13.9	95	68	70	67.3	99	7/10
1.25 2 5d	£10,745	11.0	106	85	89	65.7	100	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3600x1600x1480, 35-litre fuel tank, 200/870-litre boot, 2 engines, 7 trims, 11 models in total.

CEE'D

Still a white goods car, but now it's white goods by John Lewis. Build quality is a rival for VW now, as is much else.



	PRICE	N-62	MPH	RHP	IRFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.6 CRDi 4	£22,095							
1.6T 3d GT	£20,700	7.4	143	201	195	38.2	171	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4310x1780x1470, 53-litre fuel tank, 380/1318-litre boot, 3 engines, 5 trims, 18 models in total.

I SPORTAGE

One of the best-looking compact SUVs, but weird habits stop it being as good to drive as it is to look at.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.7 CRDi 2WD 2	£21,200	11.9	107	114	188	54.3	135	6/10
2.0 CRDi KX-4	£28,200	9.4	120	181	282	46.3	158	6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4440x1860x1650, 58-litre fuel tank, 564/1353-litre boot, 4 engines, 6 trims, 9 models in total.

The supercar for those who don't care about lap times Or The Green Party. Or visibility. But like hexagons.

Lambo's riposte to the 458 and 650S Smoother, slicker, but is still essentially Gallardo v.2.0.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING		
LP 610-4	£188,000	3.2	202	610	413	22.6	290	9/10		
Fire NCAD = /- 1-144-11 in many 4450-1034-1165 00 liter for land										

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4459x1924x1165, 80-litre fuel tank TBA-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

Murcielago replacement doesn't disap point. A hint of Audi has crept in, but the Aventador is still bonkers.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
LP 700-4	£260,040	2.9	217	700	509	17.6	370	8/10
LP 700-4 R'ster	£288,840	3.0	217	700	509	17.6	370	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4780x2030x1140, 90-litre fuel tank, n/a-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 2 models in total.

TopGear on Land Rover: A genuine UK success story with the whole range as at home on a field as the red carpet.

HN...RS 3034

AUDI RS3

Basic price £38,820 **Engine** 2480cc, 5cyl, 362bhp, 343lb ft, 34mpg, 189g/km

Performance 0-60mph 4.3secs, 155mph

Weight 1,520kg

Colour Daytona Grey (£550) Wheels 19" titanium '5-arm Rotor' (£795)

Trim Black Nappa leather (£0)

Standard equipment Adaptive headlights,

tyre-pressure monitoring, dual-zone climate

control, heated seats, DAB, Bluetooth

Options Audi Magnetic Ride (£995), Super-sports seats (£795), Bang & Olufsen stereo (£750), red brake calipers (£325), Driver Assistance pack (£705), Technology

pack (£1,495), High-gloss black styling pack

(£695), reversing camera (£275)

TOTAL PRICE £46.200

Still going, still a workhorse farmer's cart, where practicality and toughness outweigh, well, everything really.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £33,005 14.7 90 122 265 25.5 295 Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 3890/4640x1790x2020, 60-litre fuel

tank, 1600/2300-litre boot, 1 engine, 3 trims, 6 models in total

Freelander gets a new name, and much more besides. Not cheap, but it's what yummy-mummys will be driving this year



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
2.2 SD4 SE	£32,395	9.8	117	190	310	46.3	162	8/10
2.2 SD4 9sp HSE	£39,400	8.4	117	190	310	44.8	166	8/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4599xTBAx1724, 68-litre fuel tank, TBA-litre boot, 1 engine, 4 trims, 4 models in total.

DATA IN NUMBERS: PANIC AT THE DISCO

- → Outgoing 2.2 SD4 190 engine 46.3mpg, 162g/km CO,
- → **New 2.0 TD4 180 engine** 53.3mpg, 139g/km CO,

DISCOVERY

The best practical SUV on sale. Massive inside, thoughtful design, astonishi ability. Revised once again in 2014.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING	
3.0 SDV6 SE	£41,600	8.8	112	256	443	35.3	213	9/10	
Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4830x1880x1890, 84-litre fuel									

tank, 280/2560-litre boot, 1 engine, 4 trims, 4 models in total.

RANGE ROVER EVOQUE

A Range Rover for a younger, more stylish, more urban audience. One for fashionistas, not farmers.



PRICE	0-02	MPH	RHL	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
£48,500	7.1	135	240	250	36.2	181	8/10
£29,205	10.6	112	150	280	56.3	133	7/10
£38,805	9.5	124	190	310	49.6	149	8/10
	£29,205	£29,205 10.6	£29,205 10.6 112	£29,205 10.6 112 150	£29,205 10.6 112 150 280	£29,205 10.6 112 150 280 56.3	£29,205 10.6 112 150 280 56.3 133

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4360x1960x11610, 60/70-litre fuel tank, 550/1445-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 12 models in total

RANGE ROVER SPORT

A prettier RRS would be a contradiction in terms, but the new one definitely comes with less thuggishness.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING	
5.0 SVR	£95,150	4.5	162	550	502	22.1	298	9/10	
3.0 SDV6 HSE	£61,950	6.8	130	292	442	37.7	199	9/10	
3.0H SDV6 HEV	£85,850	6.4	130	345	517	45.6	164	9/10	
E 11645 / 1 11/11/11 1055 1005 17005 00 I'm 6 1									

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4850x1983x17800, 80-litre fuel tank, 784/1761-litre boot, 6 engines, 6 trims, 8 models in total

RANGE ROVER

This is not an SUV. That's too common a badge. Instead, think go-anywhere luxury car. Or GALC. Hmm, catchy.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
5.0 SC Autobi'	£102,450	5.1	140	510	461	20.5	322	8/10
3.0 TDV6 Vogue	£74,950	7.4	130	258	442	37.7	196	9/10
3.0 SDV6 HEV	£102,450	6.9	135	340	517	44.1	169	8/10
4.4 SDV8 Vge SE	£88,850	6.5	135	340	517	32.5	229	9/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5000/5199x2070x1840, 85/105-litre fuel tnk, 909/2030-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 11 models in total.

TopGear on Lexus: Angular luxo-Toyotas reverting back to hybrid slumberland after mad, intoxicatingly awesome LFA supercar.

3-Series drive too well for you? Then buy this, it's worse. In other areas, IS gives the Germans a much tougher time.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
IS 250 SE	£26,495	8.1	143	205	185	32.8	199	7/10
IS 300h Exec	£29,995	8.4	125	220	163	65.7	101	7/10

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 4670x1810x1430, 66-litre fuel tank, 450/480-litre boot, 2 engines, 6 trims, 10 models in total.

Bit heavier than we hoped, but roaring V8 is sure to give BMW's M4 a few headaches. Good thing, too.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATIN
5.0 V8	£60,995	4.5	167	450	384	26.2	252	7/10
Euro NCAP r	ı/a, LxWxH	l in mi	m: 470)5x184	15x139	0, 66-l	itre fu	el tani

366-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

Curious, Lexus sees the need to cross an SUV with a sharp object in a not altogether happy alliance.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
NX 300h SE	£31,495	9.3	112	200	152	54.3	121	5/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4630x1845x1645, 56-litre fuel tank, 475/1785-litre boot, 2 engines, 5 trims, 6 models in total.

TopGear on Lotus: Overlook shaky economics and turnip farmer jokes and you'll find sports cars close to driving nirvana.

Still a joy, the current Elise offers visceral driving thrills in a relatively usable package. This is steering feel.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.6 Standard	£28,720	6.0	127	134	118	45.0	149	8/10
1.8 S	£36,970	4.6	145	220	185	37.5	175	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 3790x1850x1120, 44-litre fuel tank, 112-litre boot, 2 engines, 2 trims, 6 models in total

Updated in 2012 with a much improved interior. Brilliant as ever to drive. Downsides? Porsche's latest 911...



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
3.5 Standard	£52,665	4.9	162	276	258	30.3	217	8/10
3.5 S	£61,895	4.6	172	345	295	28.7	229	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a. LxWxH in mm: 4340x1850x1220, 55-litre fuel tank 160-litre boot, 2 engines, 2 trims, 4 models in total

Lotus' track car has grown up and got heavier. But don't worry, this makes it more usable. Deliriously good to drive.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATIN
3.5 V6 Standard	£54,500	4.0	170	345	295	28.0	236	9/10
3.5 V6 Roadster	£54,500	3.8	145	345	295	28.0	236	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4050x1800x1150, 40-litre fuel tank, n/a-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 3 models in total.

TopGear on Maserati: Ferrari's moody cousin. Every model beaten in every way by German opposition, save for cachet, cool, and style.

Maserati builds a BMW 5-Series. It's available with a diesel engine. Well, they think it's a good idea.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
3.0 V6	£53,580	5.6	163	330	369	29.4	223	6/10
3.0 V6 TT S	£64,730	5.0	177	410	405	27.2	242	7/10
3.0 V6 Diesel	£49,160	6.3	155	275	442	47.9	158	6/10

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4970x1950x1460, 80-litre fuel tank, 500-litre boot, 3 engine, 2 trims, 3 models in total.

MOST ECO DIESELS SUB £15K







0 Hyundai i20 1.1 Blue Drive 88.3mpg



0 Renault Clio 1.5 dCi ECO 88.3mpg



A Kia Rio 1.1 CRDi 88.3mpg



0 Vauxhall Corsa 1.3 CDTi 95 S/S 85.6mpg



O Volkswagen Polo 1.4 TDI 75 83.1mpg



N Skoda Fabia 1.4 TDI 90 83.1mpg



0 Seat Ibiza 1.2 CR TDI 80.7mpq



0 Citroen C3 1.6 BlueHDi 75 78.5mpg



1 Nissan Note 1.5 dCi 78.5mpg

QUATTROPORTE

Noooo – what have they done? The old one was soul personified, this looks a bit... meh. Still, at least it drives better.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
.0 TT V6	£80,125	4.9	177	410	405	26.9	244	7/10
.8 TT V8	£108,195	4.7	190	530	523	23.7	278	7/10
Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5050x1900x1440, 90-litre fuel								

tank, 450-litre boot, 2 engines, 1 trims, 2 models in total.

GRANTURISMO

3.

Muscular, pretty coupe that's more GT than sports car. Nothing wrong there and the MC Strad has bite if you need it.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
4.7 460 Sport	£90,820	4.8	185	460	383	19.7	331	8/10
4.7 MC Stradale	£110,145	4.5	188	450	376	19.5	337	8/10
4.7 GranCabrio	£98,350	5.2	177	440	361	19.5	337	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4880x1920x1350, 86-litre fuel tank, 260-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 5 models in total.

TopGear on Mazda:

Remember when every single Ford was the best to drive in its class? Well, Mazda's nicked that mantle.

The last 2 was a sleeper – it never set out to be sparky, but somehow achieved it. Same again. Just with a hint more polish.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.5 SE	£11,995	12.1	106	75	100	60.1	110	7/10
1.5 Sport Nav	£17,395	8.7	124	115	109	56.5	117	7/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4060x1695x1495, 44-litre fuel tank, 280/950-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 12 models in total.

The 6's design language moves to the 3. So does the handling verve. After that we're less sure why you'd have one over a Golf.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.5 SE	£16,695	10.8	113	100	110	55.4	119	6/10
2.0 Sport Nav	£21,620	8.2	130	165	154	48.7	135	6/10
2.2D SE	£19,245	8.1	130	150	280	68.9	107	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4465x1795x1450, 51-litre fuel tank, 364-litre boot, 4 engines, 3 trims, 17 models in total.

Handsome mid-size saloon with some clever engine tech underneath. Drives well, possibly a bit middle management.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
2.0 165 Sport	£23,495	9.1	134	165	154	47.8	135	6/10
2.2D Sport	£25,595	7.8	129	175	309	62.7	119	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4870x1840x1450, 62-litre fuel tank, 489-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 13 models in total.

Ignore the stereotypes: the MX-5 is back and, crucially, better than it's ever been before. Happy, simple fun.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.5 SE	£18,495	8.3	127	131	111	47.1	139	9/10
2.0 Sport	£22,695	7.3	133	160	148	40.4	161	9/10

Furo NCAP n/a TxWxH in mm: 3915x1735x1225 45-litre fuel tank, 130-litre boot, 2 engines, 5 trims, 9 m

DATA IN NUMBERS: WEIGHING IT UP

→ Old Mazda MX-5 1.8 kerbweight 1080kg

→ New Mazda MX-5 1.5 kerbweight 1015kg

CX-3

Because the Nissan Juke doesn't have enough rivals already. CX-3 is pretty and likely to drive well, though.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
2.0 SE	£17,595	9.0	119	120	151	47.9	137	8/10
1.5D SE	£18,995	10.1	110	105	199	70.6	105	8/10
Euro NCAP	n/a. LxWxF	l in mr	n: 427	5x176	5x153	5, 48-l	itre fu	el

tank, 350/1260-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 12 models in total.

Mazda says the design is radical. It isn't But much else is. Clever engines, good dynamics and lots of space inside.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
2.0 2WD SE-L	£21,595	9.2	124	165	155	47.1	139	8/10
2.2D 2WD Sp'	£25,695	9.2	126	150	280	61.4	119	8/10
2.2D 4WD Sport	£27,695	8.8	129	175	309	54.3	136	8/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4560x1840x1710, 56-litre fuel tank, 503/1620-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 6 models in total.

McLaren

TopGear on McLaren: Hyper-clinical British outfit spinning ever more baffling model choices off its bi-turbo V8 and carbon tub.

Not a facelifted 12C, says McLaren, but an all new car. Has a P1 nose, more speed, is the car the 12C should have been.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
650S	£195,250	3.0	207	650	500	24.2	275	9/10
650S Spider	£215,250	3.2	207	650	500	24.2	275	9/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4512x1910x1199, 72-litre fuel tank, 145-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 2 models in total

67/5LT

The Ronseal 650S: 675bhp and a longer tail, by 12mm. Trade descriptions might want to have a word.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LB FT	MPG	G02	RATING
675LT	£259,500	2.9	205	675	515	24.2	275	TBA

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4546x1910x1188, 72-litre fuel tank, 145-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

Same carbon tub as the 12C, same base V8; but five times the price. Yin to the LaFerrari's yang. Well done, Ron.



PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
£866,000	2.8	217	916	664	34.0	194	10/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4700x2000x1110, n/a-litre fuel tank, 120-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

TopGear on Mercedes-Benz:
Dusted off Audi's niche-o-matic cannon; dreaming up more letters combos than a bath of alphabet soup.

A-CLASS

Despite the bulbous drunkards nose, this is a conventional hatch. Watch the spec or you'll muck it up.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
A 250 by AMG	£29,375	6.6	149	211	258	44.1	148	5/10
A 45 AMG	£38,195	4.6	155	365	332	40.9	161	8/10
A 180 CDI SE	£21,790	11.3	118	109	191	76.4	98	6/10
A 200 CDI AMGS	£25,110	9.3	130	136	221	64.2	116	6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4290x1780x1430, 50-litre fuel tank, 341/1157-litre boot, 5 engines, 5 trims, 17 models in total.

B-CLASS

This Volkswagen Golf SV rival remains oddly proportioned but has plenty of tech inside. Not to mention space.



tank, 488-litre boot, 5 engines, 3 trims, 17 models in total.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
AMG C 63 S	£66,810	4.0	155	517	517	34.5	192	9/10
C 220 BT AMG L	£33,270	7.7	145	170	295	70.6	106	8/10
C 350e PHEV	£37,875	5.9	155	293	258	134.5	48	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4685x1810x1447, 66-litre fuel tank, 480-litre boot, 8 engines, 5 trims, 98 models in total.

E-CLASS



	PNIUE	U-02	MPN	DUL	LDFI	MITU	602	nalinu
E 63 AMG	£75,905	4.2	155	557	531	28.8	230	9/10
E 220 BT SE Est	£36,060	8.8	136	177	295	60.1	124	7/10
E 350 BT AMG	£41,210	6.4	155	258	457	53.3	139	7/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4870x1850x1470, 59-litre fuel tank, 540-litre boot, 7 engines, 6 trims, 24 models in total.

S-CLASS

Meet the car that has single-handedly saved the luxury car class from the SUV incursion. Sublime in most ways.

	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
S 400 L Hybrid	£70,935	6.8	155	333	272	44.8	147	9/10
S 500 L	£88,400	4.8	155	455	516	31.7	207	9/10
S 350 L BlueTEC	£66,910	6.8	155	258	457	50.4	148	9/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5110/5250x1900x1490, 70/80-litre fuel tank, 510/530-litre boot, 7 engines, 5 trims, 21 models in total

CLS-CLASS

One of the most competent cars in Merc's range. It no longer defines cool like the first one, but it's all top drawer.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
CLS 350 BTEC	£49,950	6.5	155	265	457	52.3	142	8/10
CLS 63 AMG SB	£87,010	4.2	155	593	590	28.0	235	9/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4920x1850x1470, 580-litre fuel tank, 520-litre boot, 4 engines, 3 trims, 11 models in total.

S-CLASS COUPE

Loads of tech, loads of power, loads of class, quite a bit of cash. New coupe is good enough to justify it all.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	C02	RATING
S 500	£96,195	4.6	155	455	516	30.0	219	9/10
S 63 AMG	£125,605	4.3	155	585	663	27.9	237	9/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5027x1899x1411, 80-litre fuel tank, 400-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 3 models in total.

Third-gen SLK still hasn't got the dynamic talent it needs. Gadgets galore, including a roof which changes opacity.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
SLK 350 AMG Sp	£44,610	5.6	155	306	272	39.8	167	6/10
SLK 55 AMG	£55,350	4.6	155	421	398	33.6	195	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4130x1810x1300, 66-litre fuel tank, 225/335-litre boot, 5 engines, 3 trims, 6 models in total.

SL-CLASS

Perhaps the best all-round, usable hard-top convertible on sale today. Practical, fast, excellent quality and dynamics.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
SL 500	£81,920	4.6	155	435	516	31.0	212	8/10
SL 63 AMG	£112,520	4.2	155	537	590	28.5	231	8/10
SL 65 AMG	£170,825	4.0	155	630	737	24.4	270	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4530x1830x1320, 80-litre fuel tank, 235/339-litre boot, 4 engines, 2 trims, 4 m odels in total.

AMG gets serious about hammering Porsche. Doesn't quite have a 911's finesse, but boy does it make you feel good.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING	
GT	£97,200	4.0	189	462	443	30.4	216	8/10	
GT S	£110,500	3.8	193	517	480	30.1	219	8/10	
Fura NCAD n/a LyMyH in mm. 4546y1020y1207 OF litra fuel									

tank, 285-litre boot, 2 engines, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

GLA

On paper little more than a pointless curiosity, but in reality a rather well judged crossover. Better than the CLA at least.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING	
GLA 45 AMG	£44,600	4.8	155	360	332	37.7	175	8/10	
GLA 250 4Matic	£30,295	7.1	143	211	250	44.1	150	7/10	

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4417x1804x1494, 50/56-litre fuel tank, 481-litre boot, 3 engines, 8 trims, 23 models in total.

Latest M-Class does nothing to lift it above rivals, except look a bit strange. Which is hardly encouraging for buyers.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING		
ML 250	£48,190	9.0	130	204	369	46.3	159	7/10		
ML 350 BlueTec	£51,335	7.4	139	258	457	39.2	189	7/10		
ML 63 AMG	£86,995	4.8	155	525	517	23.9	276	7/10		
E NGAR										

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4 tank, 690/2010-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 5 models in total.

The GL is basically the even bigger, seven-seat version of the ML. Able to change weather systems as it drives along.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
GL 350 AMG Sp'	£60,755	7.9	137	258	457	35.3	209	7/10

Euro NCAP n/a LxWxH in mm: 5100x1920x1840, 45-litre fuel tank, 360/2200-litre boot, 2 engines, 1 trim, 2 models in total



Vorsprung with even more Technik.

Business users only with Contract Hire.[^]

Official fuel consumption figures for the Audi A4 Saloon SE Technik 2.0 TDI ultra 163PS manual in mpg (I/100km): Urban 56.5 (5.0), Extra Urban 74.3 (3.8), Combined 67.3 (4.2). CO2 emissions: 109g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

Chinese-backed resurrection. Sells fewer cars annually than Ford shifts in the time you're reading this.

After the startling success of the MG6, MG unleashes a supermini on the world. World can hardly believe its luck.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 1.5 VTi-TECH £8,399 10.9 108 106 101 48.7 136

Euro NCAP SSS LxWxH in mm: 4018x1729x1507, 45-litre fuel tank, 285-litre boot, 1 engine, 4 trims, 4 models in total.

MG6

Recently facelifted. Marginally better cabin, but sorely lacking everywhere else. Despite being cheap, best avoided.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 1.9D S £13,995 8.4 120 150 258 61.4 119 4/10 Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4651x1827x1472, 62-litre fuel tank, 498/1379-litre boot, 1 engine, 3 trims, 3 models in total.

Top Gear on Mini: New hatch uglier but more sorted. Pointless Paceman and two-seaters soon to die. Good riddance.

MINI HATCH

Yes, it's bigger, and no, that isn't necessarily a good thing. Apart from that, the new Mini is predictably excellent.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
One	£13,750	9.9	121	103	133	61.4	108	7/10
Cooper	£15,300	7.9	130	136	162	62.7	105	8/10
Cooper S	£18,650	6.8	146	192	206	49.5	133	8/10
Cooper D	£16,450	9.2	127	116	199	80.7	92	7/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 3821x1727x1414, 40/44-litre fuel tank, 211-litre boot, 6 engines, 6 trims, 12 models in total.

MINI 5-DOOR

See above. And remove good looks. Not the nicest in profile, but handily bigger and only £600 more. Fills a(nother) gap.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
Cooper 5dr	£15,900	8.2	129	136	162	60.1	109	7/10
Cooper SD 5dr	£20,050	7.4	140	170	266	68.9	109	7/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 3982x1727x1414, 40/44-litre fuel tank, 278-litre boot, 6 engines, 6 trims, 12 models in total

DATA IN NUMBERS: MINI MINI?

→ **Toyota Yaris 5dr** 32mm shorter than Mini 5-doo

PACEMAN

Another car we didn't ask for, from a firm with seemingly few ideas. What's the Paceman for, Mini?



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING £22,350 7.4 137 190 192 47.1 139 Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4110x1790x1520, 47-litre fuel

tank, 330/1080-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 7 models in total.



Price £208.090 Specs 597bhp. 398lb ft, 0-62mph 3.0secs,

VMax 202mph, 19,9mpg, CO. 275g/km

We still think the standard 458 Italia is something special. but the, er, Speciale is even more, er, special. How is the imminent new 488 GTB turbo going to top this?



Price £215,250 Specs 641bhp, 500lb ft. 0-62mph 3.0secs. VMax 204mph, 24.2mpg, CO₂ 275g/km

The finest British supercar in many, many years. Probably ever, in fact. Ballistic twin-turbo V8, mad minimalist interior and Maranello-crushing pace. Jolly good.



Price £240,083 Specs 730bhp. 508lb ft, 0-62mph 3.1secs, VMax 211mph, 18.8mpg, CO, 350g/km

The replacement for the awesome 599 is smaller and lighter, but even more powerful and faster. Erk. As good as frontengined, V12 Ferrariness gets. And it gets pretty damn good



Price £200,000 **Specs** 650bhp, 604lb ft, 0-62mph 3.0secs, VMax 225mph, n/a mpg, CO_o n/a g/km

Built in a shed in Leicester around the engine from a Volvo XC90. Doesn't sound too promising, but the Noble is as scarily scintillating as nude make-wrestling, yet friendly, too



LAMBORGHINI HURACAN

Price £188,000 **Specs** 610bhp, 413lb ft, 0-62mph 3.2secs, VMax 202mph, 22.6mpg, CO₂ 290g/km

Very fast around the TG track, and better than any previous Lambo to live with, stable, fast, well built. Audi's influence can be felt more than ever. This is both good and bad.

TopGear on Mitsubishi: Hard to care now Evo is dead, but electro-Outlander actuall Britain's top-selling EV. Nope. Still not fussed.

EVO FQ-440

Technically, the Evo IS dead. Apart from these 40 special models. Pricey? Yes. Fast? You'd better believe it.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 Evo FQ-440 MR £50,915 TBA TBA 440 412 TBA TBA

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4505x1810x1481, 55-litre fuel tank, TBA-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

OUTLANDER

No-nonsense seven-seat SUV. Fair to middling. Plug-in hybrid version offered too. No one will buy that one either.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 2.0 PHEV GX3h £33,304 11.0 106 163 245 148.7 44 2 2 DI-D GX2 £23,984 10.2 124 150 280 53.3 138

***** LxWxH in mm: 4660x1800x1680, 60-litre fuel tank, 550/1755-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 7 models in total

DATA IN NUMBERS: ELECTRIC RANGER

→ Claimed EV range of Outlander PHEV 32.5 miles

TopGear on Morgan: Idiosyncratic British sports cars designed to give you wood and a healthy exposure to the elements. Poop poop.

3WHEELER

Eccentric and impractical, but for putting a smile on your face, nothing this side of a Tiger Moth competes.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
espoke 2d	£30,000	4.5	120	110	100	n/a	n/a	8/10

Furo NCAP n/a 1 xWxH in mm: n/a 40-litre fuel tank n/a-litre boot 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

CLASSIC

2.0 Be

The only car to look like a restoration when actually new. The reasonably new Plus 8 is a fearsomely fast thing.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
2.0 Plus 4	£36,290	7.5	118	154	148	40.4	164	6/10
4.8 Plus 8	£85,200	4.5	155	367	370	23.0	282	7/10
3/07/12								

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4010x1500/1720x1220, 50-litre fuel tank, n/a-litre boot, 4 engines, 6 trims, 6 models in total.

I AERO 8

Some ash still lurks in the frame of this sports car. Creaks a bit, but otherwise not as antiquated as you might think.



	PRICE	U-62	MPH	RHL	TREI	MPG	GU2	KATING
4.8 V8 Coupe	£99,950	4.5	170	367	370	23.0	282	8/10
4.8 V8 S'sports	£126,900	4.5	170	367	370	26.0	256	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4120x1770x1200, 57-litre fuel tank, 227-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

Audi Vorsprung durch Technik



The Audi A4 Saloon SE Technik from £265 per month.* Includes:

► Audi parking system plus ➤ MMI Navigation system plus ➤ Metallic paint ➤ Milano leather upholstery

audi.co.uk/offers

*At the end of the Contract Hire agreement the vehicle and ownership rights will stay with Audi Finance. *Plus VAT and initial rental. Business users only. Based on the Audi A4 Saloon SE Technik 2.0 TDI ultra 163PS manual. Based on 3 years, 10,000 miles per annum. Contract Hire agreement with an initial rental of £1,590.00 (plus VAT). 6.0p (plus VAT) per mile excess mileage charges apply. Offer available for vehicles ordered between 1 July 2015 and 30 September 2015 from participating Centres. Offer may be varied or withdrawn at any time. Further charges may be payable when vehicle is returned, subject to the contract fair wear and tear guidelines and mileage. VAT payable at the prevailing rate. Finance subject to status. Available to 18s and over. Subject to availability. Prices quoted and examples shown are correct at time of publication. July 20151 and do not take into account any variation to government taxes or charges arising after the date of publication.

NISSAN

TopGear on Nissan: Bizarre Addams family of geriatric hatches, cash-cow crossovers and the mind-scrambling GT-R freak show.

NOTE

New nose, same commodious cabin. Otherwise precious little to tempt Doris out of her Jazz.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £14,625 11.7 112 98 108 65.7 99

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4100x1695x1536, 41-litre fuel tank, 325-litre boot, 3 engines, 4 trims, 12 models in total.

JUKE

Clever little SUV crossover that looks like... well, looks like nothing else we can think of. Very nice, if a little odd.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.6 94 Visia	£13,620	12.0	104	94	103	47.1	138	5/10
1.6 Nismo	£21,650	7.0	137	218	207	39.2	165	6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4135x1765x1565, 46-litre fuel tank, 350/1181-litre boot, 6 engines, 5 trims, 17 models in total.

I PULSAR

Years spent sorting its crossovers mean Nissan has lost its hatchback touch. Pulsar is gloriously sub-average.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.2 DiG-T	£15,995	10.8	118	115	140	56.5	117	3/10
1.5 dCi 110	£17,595	11.5	115	110	192	78.5	94	3/10

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 4387x1768x1520, 46-litre fuel tank, 360/1307-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 8 models in total

The first mass-produced leccy car. It's impressive, but our infrastructure needs sorting before it really makes sense.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 **EV Visia** £26,490 11.9 90 109 206 n/a 0

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4450x1780x1570, no fuel tank, 330/680-litre boot, 1 electric motor, 3 trims, 3 models in total.

QASHQAI

Nissan started the Qashqai craze, so the new one is predictably safe. It's better than ever for, you know, family stuff.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.2 DiG-T Visia	£18,265	11.3	114	115	140	50.4	132	8/10
1.6 DiG-T n-tec	£32,200	9.1	124	163	177	48.7	138	8/10
1.6 dCi n-tec	£24,700	10.5	118	130	236	64.2	115	8/10

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4370x1800x1595, 65-litre fuel tank, 430-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 19 models in total.

The X-Trail used to be a rufty-tufty thing. Now it's been emasculated. As result, we think it's better. Fickle, us?



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG C02

1.6 dCi 130 Visia £23,195 10.5 117 130 236 57.6 129

Furo NCAP **** I xWxH in mm: 4643x1820x1695 60-litre fuel tank, 135(550)/1982-litre boot, 1 engine, 4 trims, 14 models in total.



MAZDA GX-5 2.2

Price £25,995 Specs 148bhp. 280lb ft, 0-62mph 9.4secs, VMax 122mph. 54.3mpg. CO., 136g/km

The surprise of the SUV world. Not because it drives well - Mazda is normally good at dynamics - but because it's as refined as any German rival.



Price £18.550

Suecs 110bhp, 148lb ft, 0-62mph 10.9secs, VMax 111mph, 51.4mpg, CO, 128g/km

Skoda's most interesting car. Loses out to the Mazda simply because it's getting a bit old now, but quality, comfort and dynamics are still up there with the best.



Price £29,710 Specs 194bhp, 311lb ft. 0-62mph 10.1secs. VMax 118mph 41.5mpg, CO., 178g/km

Sharp looks, family-friendly interior and value-formoney, the new Santa Fe carries on where the old one left off. Not the most exciting, but good all the same.



NISSAN X-TRAIL 1.6 DCI N-TEC 4WD

Price £29,345 Specs 130bhp, 236lb ft, 0-62mph 11.0secs, VMax 116mph, 53.3mpg, CO, 139g/km

OK, so the new X-Trail may not be as rugged as the old one, but it's only responding to customer demand. Good kit count, smooth drive, decent all-rounder. Avoid CVT.



FORD KUGA TITANIUM 2.0 TDCI FWD

Price £24,345 **Specs** 150bhp, 273lb ft, 0-62mph 10.1secs, VMax 121mph, 60.1mpg, CO, 122g/km

The new Kuga has lost some of the dynamic edge of the first gen, but build quality and engines are improved. A solid second coming, but not spectacular.

370Z

Z still looks great, but where's the firebreathing manliness of the old one, Nissan? GT86 has highlighted its shortcomings.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 3.7 V6 Standard £27,445 5.3 155 326 269 26.9 249 3.7 V6 Nismo £37,585 5.2 155 344 274 26.6 248

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4250x1850x1320, 72-litre fuel tank, 235-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 3 models in total.

GT-R

Cheap at twice the price, the GT-R is an uber-techy, violently capable, ruthlessly rapid speed machine. Drive one.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG 3.8 V6 550 £78,030 2.8 196 550 466 24.0 275 9/10 3.8 V6 Nismo £125 010 <27 TRA 600 A66 TRA TRA 9/10

Euro NCAP n/a. LxWxH in mm: 4670x1895x1370. 74-litre fuel tank, 315-litre boot, 2 engines, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

TopGear on Noble: Yes, it's from the home of pork pies. Yes, the engine's from a school-run bus. Doesn't stop Noble being a supercar force.

M600

Powered by a twin turbo Volvo XC90 V8, the old school M600 is epically fast and amazingly supple. Major want.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 £200,000 3.0 225 650 604 n/a n/a 9/10 Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4360x1910x1120, 68-litre fuel tank,

n/a-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

TopGear on Pagani: The greatest exponents of artistic Italian pageantry and Hulk-spec power the world has yet seen.

The name is what you exclaim when you nail the throttle in this twin turbo V12'd, active aero'd hypercar.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 £990,000 n/a 230 730 811 23.5 300 8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4610x2040x1170, 85-litre fuel tank, n/a-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

Top Gear on Peugeot: Chassis bods have refound their mojo with 208 GTi and RCZ R. Design needs to be more Onyx, less ordinary.

Now more refined and comfortable Can be had with a 1.2. Have the 1.0. That's the one Toyota made.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 1.0 69 Access 3d £8,345 14.3 99 69 70 68.9 95 Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3475x1615x1460, 35-litre fuel

tank, 196/780-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 12 models in total.

208

Congratulations Peugeot, it's only taken you 25 years to reimagine the 205. 208 is light, likeable and French. In a good way.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.0 Access ac 3d	£11,695	14.0	103	68	66	64.2	102	6/10
1.6 THP GTi	£19,145	6.5	143	208	221	52.3	125	7/10
1.6 B'HDi Allure	£16,645	13.3	106	75	169	94.2	79	6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3970x1740x1460, 50-litre fuel tank, 285/1152-litre boot, 6 engines, 7 trims, 39 models in total.

308

Well, knock us down with a feather, out of nowhere, Peugeot gives us a hatch good to drive and own. Gobs smacked.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.6 THP GT	£24,095	7.5	146	205	210	50.4	130	8/10
1.6 e-HDi Active	£19,445	10.2	121	115	199	76.3	95	8/10
The American Control of the Control								

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4253x1804x1457, 53-litre fuel tank, 470/1309-litre boot, 9 engines, 5 trims, 25 models in total.

Peugeot's replacement for the 407 is actually quite nice in an average sort of way. Just been facelifted.



	PHIGE	U-02	MPH	BMP	LBTI	MPG	602	KATING
2.0 HDi Active	£23,695	9.8	130	150	273	72.4	97	5/10
Euro NCAP tank, 473-litr								e fuel

Peugeot's stunning coupe marks a renaissance. Good-looking, fun to drive, tolerable value. Now go buy an Audi TT.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.6 THP 200 GT	£27,150	7.6	146	200	206	42.1	155	7/10
RCZ R	£32,250	5.9	155	270	244	44.8	145	7/10
2.0 HDi 163 GT	£26,600	8.7	137	163	240	53.2	139	7/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4290x1850x1350, 55-litre fuel tank, 309-litre boot, 4 engines, 3 trims, 6 models in total.

2008

High-rise supermini that's increasingly popular in the wake of the Juke. A little mash-up which just about works.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.2 VTi Access	£13,195	13.5	105	82	87	57.6	114	5/10
1.6 BlueHDi	£16,545	11.3	114	100	187	78.5	95	6/10

Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 4160x1740x1560, 50-litre fuel tank, 360/1172-litre boot, 5 engines, 4 trims, 15 models in total.

Large seven-seat MPV that looks pretty good and does everything a family might want, although it's less brilliant to drive.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
2.0 HDi Active	£24,295	10.0	121	150	251	53.3	138	5/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4530x1837x1638, 60-litre fuel tank, 679/2506-litre boot, 6 engines, 3 trims, 13 models in total.





Dacia Logan MCV 1.2 Access (573I) £12/litre

Citroen Berlingo M'space 1.6 Touch (675I) £20/litre





Land Rover Defender 90 (1600I) £15/litre

SsangYong Turismo (8751) £21/litre





Fiat Doblo 1.4 95 Pop (790I) £17/litre

Peugeot Partner Tepee 1.6 Active (6751) £22/litre





Dacia Sandero 1.2 Access (320I) £19/litre

Peugeot 308 SW 1.2 e-THP 100 Access (660I) £25/litre





Dacia Duster 1.6 Access (475I) £19/litre

Seat Toledo 1.2 TSI Style (550I) £26/litre 315 miles

TopGear on Porsche: Irritatingly great to drive, even when it's a 4x4. There's a reason every sports car is dubbed '911-fighter'...

The best sports-roadster on sale, bar none. Don't shop anywhere else if you can afford it. S betters Jaguar F-Type.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
2.7 265	£39,553	5.8	164	265	206	34.4	192	9/10
3.4 315 S	£47,858	5.1	173	315	265	32.1	205	9/10
3.4 GTS	£53,872	5.0	174	330	272	31.4	211	9/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4370x1800x1280, 64-litre fuel tank, 130/280-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 3 models in total,

CAYMAN

The 911's poor relation? Only if you're a social climber. The Cayman is the purer, more satisfying driver's car.



5.7 5.0	165 175	275 325		34.4 32.1	192 206	8/10 9/10
5.0	175	325	273	321	206	9/10
			_,,		_30	0,10
4.9	177	340	280	31.4	211	9/10
4.4	183	385	309	27.4	238	9/10
		4.4 183	4.4 183 385	4.4 183 385 309	4.4 183 385 309 27.4	4.4 183 385 309 27.4 238

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4380x1800x1300, 64-litre fuel tank, 150/425-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 4 models in total.

Styling is evolutionary and cabin shared with Panamera, but this is Porsche proving it's the world's best sports car builder.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
3.8 Carrera S	£83,545	4.5	188	400	324	29.7	224	9/10
3.8 C4 GTS	£95,862	4.4	188	440	324	28.5	233	9/10
3.8 GT ₃ RS	£131,296	3.3	193	500	339	22.2	296	10/10
3.8 Turbo S	£142,120	3.1	197	560	552	29.1	227	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4490x1800x1300, 64-litre fuel tank, 135-litre boot, 6 engines, 10 trims, 21 models in total.

918 SPYDER

Quite possibly the most complex car in the world. But it all works, and is mindbending. Also quite fast.



		PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING	
918		£659,775	2.8	211	885	801	85	79	10/10	
	Euro NCAP r	/a, LxWxH	l in mr	n: 464	3x194	0x116	7, 70-li	tre fu	el tank,	

110-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

PANAMERA

Four-door, four-seat family Porsche. Very fast, quite hard to fall in love with, apart from the rather outrageous GTS model.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	CO2	RATING
4.8 V8 GTS	£93,391	4.5	179	400	368	25.4	260	7/10
4.8 V8 Turbo S	£131,152	3.8	192	570	552	27.7	239	6/10
3.0 V6 Diesel	£65,289	6.8	150	250	405	43.5	172	6/10
E-Hybrid	£89,401	5.5	167	338	325	91.0	71	6/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4970x1930x1420, 80-litre fuel tank, 445/1263-litre boot, 8 engines, 8 trims, 9 models in total

A NEW BEGINNING

INTRODUCING THE ALL-NEW VOLVO XC90 MADE BY SWEDEN

> BOOK YOUR TEST DRIVE AT VOLVOCARS.CO.UK



Official fuel consumption for the all-new Volvo XC90 in MPG (I/100km) ranges from: Urban 28.8 (9.8) - 45.6 (6.2), Extra Urban 40.4 (7.9) - 52.3 (5.4), Combined 35.3 (8.0) - 134.5 (2.1). CO2 Emissions range from 186 - 49g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results.

MACAN

Porsche's Range Rover Evoque is a tidy looker that has image by the bucket-load. Thus, soon to be everywhere...



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
S	£44,650	5.4	157	340	339	32.5	204	8/10
Turbo	£60,994	4.8	165	400	405	31.7	208	8/10
S Diesel	£44,636	6.3	142	258	427	46.3	159	8/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4684x1923x1624, 65-litre fuel tank, 500/1500-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 4 models in total.

CAYENNE

Sporting SUV that's very capable and now better to look at. It no longer has a ride that ruins your spine, either.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
S E-Hybrid	£62,099	5.9	150	422	435	83.1	79	7/10
Turbo	£93,574	4.5	173	527	554	25.2	261	6/10
S Diesel	£62,099	5.4	156	383	626	35.3	209	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4855x1939x1705, 100-litre fuel tank, 670/1780-litre boot, 7 engines, 7 trims, 7 models in total.

TopGear on Radical: Super-fast, super-intense range of Nürburgring-humbling race cars. Wait – what, they're road-legal? Oh my.

Few are as extreme, and few cope as badly with British roads. A car for dry, smooth, clear tarmac. Such as a track.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 2.0.245 Std £69,850 3.4 160 245 265 n/a n/a

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4100x1790x1130, 50-litre fuel tank, n/a-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

Now here's a trick: Radical's second road car has much more power and a roof, but is far tamer to drive.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
3.7 V6	£94,500	2.8	175	350	320	n/a	n/a	8/10
3.5 V6 Turbo	£107,500	2.6	185	454	500	n/a	n/a	8/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4300x1960x1127, 50-litre fuel tank. n/a-litre boot, 2 engines, 1 trim, 2 models in total.

Top Gear on Renault: Still a pervading sense of flimsiness about Renaults. We hope the ageing RS Megane isn't the end of an era.

Rear-engined, rear drive, it's a mini-911! Only it's actually a cheeky little city car. Turbo is only one with any nous, though.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.0 SCe 70	£9,495	14.5	94	70	67	62.7	105	5/10
0.9 TCe 90	£11,695	10.8	103	90	99	65.7	99	7/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3595x1646x1554, 35-litre fuel tank, 188/980-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 4 models in total.

God knows what's got into us, but we badly want a Twizy. Mainly to sneak up on other cars in electrical silence.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
13kW EV	£7,595	n/a	50	17	42	n/a	0	7/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 2340x1240x1460, no fuel tank, 31-litre boot, 1 electric motor, 3 trims, 3 models in total.

DATA IN NUMBERS: ELECTRIC CONTRAST

- → Tesia Model S P85D 0-62mph 3.1 seconds
- → Renault Twizy O-62mph It can't do 62mph

This could be the point where electric cars start to prove themselves. The Zoe looks great and costs little.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
V Expression	£18,443	13.5	84	88	162	n/a	0	6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4090x1730x1560, no fuel tank, 328/1225-litre boot, 1 electric motor, 3 trims, 3 models in total.

FASTEST O-GOMPH AWD



a Nissan GT-R

2.8 seconds

A

2.8

Porsche 918 Spyder



0 Lamborghini Aventador SV 2.8



0 Porsche 911 Turbo S 3.1



0 Lamborghini Huracan 3.2

FASTEST O-GOMPH RWD



O Ariel Atom 350 2.5



Ø McLaren P1 2.8



0 BAC Mono 2.8



0 Caterham Seven R620 2.8



0 Ferrari LaFerrari 2.9

CLIO

A return to form for Renault. Clio 4 is good-looking and drives well. Just avoid the gutless lower-powered 1.2 petrol.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP IR FT MPG 602 0.9 TCe Dyn Nav £14675 12.2 113 90 62.8 1.2 GT-Line £17,725 9.9 124 120 140 543 120 1.6T RS 200 £19.145 6.7 142 200 177 AA R 144 7/10 1.5 dCi Exp+ £14 975 12 0 112 90 162 88 3 83 6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4060x1730x1450, 45-litre fuel tank, 320/1200-litre boot, 4 engines, 6 trims, 15 models in total.

CAPTUR

Renault's take on the Juke that's, perhaps unsurprisingly, more style than substance. Clio for us, please.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 o.9 TCe Exp+ £14,295 12,6 106 90 99 56.5 115 1.5 dCi Exp+ £15,995 12.6 106 90 162 76.4 95

Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 4120x1780x1560, 45-litre fuel tank, 377/1235-litre boot, 3 engines, 4 trims, 10 models in total.

MEGANE

It's lost the fat arse, which is a good thing. Build quality is much improved, driving manners are above average, too.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
R'Sport Nav 265	£25,935	6.0	158	265	266	37.7	174	9/10
Trophy 275	£36,430	5.8	158	275	266	37.7	174	9/10
1.5 dCi Exp'	£18,245	12.1	118	110	192	80.7	90	6/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4300x1810x1450, 60-litre fuel tank, 372/1162-litre boot, 8 engines, 6 trims, 42 models in total.

Thankfully heaps better than Renault's last crack at a big crossover – the Koleos. Qashqai rival with genuine appeal.



0-62 MPH BHP LBFT £17,995 10.1 119 132 151 50.4 126 6/10 £19,895 11.9 113 112 192 74.3 99

Euro NCAP n/a LxWxH in mm: 4449x1836x1607, 55-litre fuel tank, 864/1620-litre boot, 3 engines, 4 trims, 14 models in total.

DATA IN NUMBERS: BIGGER SISTER

- → Nissan Qashqai overall length 4370mm
- → Renault Kadjar overall length 4449mm

Mheeled pleasure yachts that've seen off the challenge of Maybach and offer more charm than Bentley.

A car for the junior plutocrat, since his boss will clearly be in a Phantom. Wave at him - he needs your pity.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £181,865 4.7 155 571 576 20.8 327 £207.105 4.8 155 571 576 20.6 329 6.6 V12 FWB

Euro NCAP n/a LxWxH in mm: 5399/5569x1948x1550, 82-litre fuel tank, 490-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 2 models in total

PHANTOM S2

Luxury British land-yacht which manages to drive as well as it soothes. Cars come no more opulent than this.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
6.75 V12 EWB	£357,875	6.1	150	453	531	18.9	349	9/10
6.75 V12 D'head	£352,745	5.8	150	453	531	19.1	347	8/10
6.75 V12 Coupe	£333,155	5.8	155	453	531	19.1	347	8/10
F NCAD	100	£l						

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 5830/6090x1990x1640, tank, 460-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 4 models in total.

If the Grand Tour still existed, this is how the aristocracy would get to Vienna. A majestic symbol of Britain.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
6.6 V12	£235,000	4.4	155	624	590	20.2	327	9/10
Euro NCAP n 470-litre boo							itre fu	el tank,

TopGear on Seat:
Supposedly the sporty arm of the VW Group behemoth.
So why does it make a seven-seat MPV, then?

Don't go expecting loads of Spanish flair here. VW doesn't permit that. This is just a very sensible Up-based city car.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.0 Eco 3d	£9,530	14.4	100	60	67	68.9	96	7/10
1.0 75 Sport 3d	£10,380	13.2	106	75	70	60.1	108	7/10

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 3560x1640x1480, 35-litre fuel tank, 238/951-litre boot, 2 engines, 5 trims, 12 models in total

Looks sharp, and pricing is good, but hasn't quite made the leap that the Leon has. Ride could be better



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING		
1.2 TDI Eco S 5d	£14,380	13.9	107	75	133	80.7	92	6/10		
1.4 Cupra SC	£18,980	6.9	142	180	184	47.9	139	7/10		
2.0 TDI FR 3d SC	£17,085	8.2	130	143	236	60.1	123	6/10		
Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4030x1690x1430, 45-litre fuel										

Seat seems to have upped its game with the all-new Leon. Just as well, VW doesn't like a failure.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.4 TSI ACT FR	£20,000	8.0	134	150	184	54.3	109	7/10
1.8 TSI FR	£21,040	7.5	140	180	184	47.1	139	8/10
2.0 TSI Cupra SC	£27,210	5.8	155	280	258	42.8	154	7/10
2.0 TDI FR	£22,820	7.5	142	184	280	67.3	109	7/10

Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 4260x1780x1460, 50-litre fuel tank, 380-litre boot, 7 engines, 5 trims, 37 models in total.

ALHAMBRA

One of the very best MPVs around. If you don't want an S-Max, this is a worthy alternative. Lots of seats, lots of space.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
2.0 TDI Eco' S	£25,630	10.9	120	140	236	50.4	146	7/10

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 4850x1900x1720, 70-litre fuel tank, 267/2297-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 5 models in total

Top Gear on Skoda: Supposedly the cheap'n'cheerful arm of the VW Group behemoth. So why does it make a £30k barge, then?

I CITIGO

Of course you recognise it – the Citigo is a lightly altered VW Up. Which makes it a very fine city car indeed.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.0 Green SE 3d	£9,495	14.4	100	60	70	68.9	95	7/10
1.0 Gre' SE L 5d	£10,815	13.2	107	75	70	67.3	98	7/10

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 3560x1640x1480, 35-litre fuel tank, 251/951-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 12 models in total

Only 9 per cent of the old Fabia has been carried into the new one. So it's 91 per cent, better says TG maths



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
1.0 S	£10,600	15.7	99	60	70	60.1	106	6/10
1.2 TSI 90 SE	£13,450	10.9	113	90	118	60.1	107	7/10
1.4 TDI 90 SE	£15,450	11.1	113	90	169	83.0	88	7/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 3992x1732x1467, 45-litre fuel tank, 330/1150-litre boot, 5 engines, 3 trims, 13 models in total

Skoda, VW's practicality-obsessed arm, gives you all the car you'll ever need. Provided you're slightly dull.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.2 TSI SE	£17,635	9.9	122	105	129	57.7	114	7/10
2.0 TSI vRS	£23,830	6.8	154	220	258	45.6	142	7/10
1.6 TDI SE	£19,650	10.4	121	105	184	74.3	99	8/10

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4660x1810x1460, 50-litre fuel tank, 590/1740-litre boot, 7 engines, 8 trims, 45 models in total.

HEROES

PORSCHE 911



WHY IS IT SPECIAL?

Because it shouldn't work. It shouldn't be this good. The laws of physics dictate that, with all that weight over the rear-axle, the 911 shouldn't handle anything like as sweetly as it does. And sure enough, early cars were a bit scary. But Porsche has stubbornly stuck to its guns for decades now, perfecting its imperfect formula. The result? Maybe the ultimate everyday sports car.

WHICH TO HAVE?

Tricky one, purely because there are so many to choose from - rear-wheel drive, all-wheel drive, convertibles, Targas, with turbos, or without. The combinations are endless. Which is why you should stick with the simplest, cheapest 911 there is - a boggo 911 Carrera 2. Good as the drop-tops, Turbos and GTSs are, a carefully specified Carrera delivers the best bang for your buck.



ENGINE/GEARBOX 3436cc 6cyl, 345bhp @ 7400rpm, 288lb ft @ 5600rpm **Performance** 0-62mph in 4.8 seconds, Top speed 180mph, 31.4 mpg, CO2 211g/km WEIGHT 1455kg PRICE £73.509

SUPERB

Enormous Skoda catches Audi-itus. Styled with ruler but we don't care because it's like an A8 for A3 mone



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.4 TSI S	£18,640	9.9	129	125	147	52.3	125	8/10
2.0 TDI SE	£22,090	8.9	135	150	250	68.9	108	8/10
2.0 TDI L&K 4x4	£33,840	7.6	143	190	295	56.5	132	8/10
Furo NCAP n	/a LxWxF	l in mi	n· 486	1x186	4×147	O TRA	-litre	fuel

tank, 625/1760-litre boot, 6 engines, 5 trims, 19 models in total.

Skoda's SUV-lite is a favourite of TopGear. It looks chunky, acts chunky and drives chunkily, too. Facelift spoils purity though.



PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
£17,000	11.4	110	105	129	46.3	142	7/10
£19,850	11.6	112	110	184	62.8	118	7/10
£24,620	9.1	121	150	251	55.4	134	8/10
	£17,000 £19,850	£17,000 11.4 £19,850 11.6	£17,000 11.4 110 £19,850 11.6 112	£17,000 11.4 110 105 £19,850 11.6 112 110	£17,000 11.4 110 105 129 £19,850 11.6 112 110 184	£17,000 11.4 110 105 129 46.3 £19,850 11.6 112 110 184 62.8	£17,000 11.4 110 105 129 46.3 142

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 4222x1793x1645, 55-litre fuel tank, 322/1760-litre boot, 4 engines, 5 trims, 21 models in total

TopGear on Smart: Best yet execution of a flawed idea. We'll have the cheaper, mechanically identical Twingo, thanks.

A doddle to park, a delight around town, but what on earth was Smart thinking when it signed off the design?



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.0 Passion	£11,125	14.4	94	71	67	68.9	93	6/10
0.9T Prime	£12,415	10.4	96	90	83	67.3	97	6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 2695, 1663, 1555, 35-litre fuel tank, 260/350-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 8 models in total.

FORFOUR

Same front end as the car above Concerning. Otherwise, it's a decent city car. But our eyes hurt.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
1.0 Passion	£11,620	15.9	94	71	67	67.3	97	6/10
1.0 Edition #1	£13,720	15.9	94	71	67	67.3	97	5/10
From NICAR				405	//F 1	a	- Ca	£

*LxWxH in mm: 3495, 1665, 1555, tank, 185/975-litre boot, 1 engine, 4 trims, 4 models in total.

TopGear on Ssang Yong: Still mired where the rest of the Koreans languished decades ago. Very cheap, for very good reason.

KORANDO

Launched at the same time as the Range Rover Evoque but not proving quite as popular. Inexplicable, surely?



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 2 0D 2WD SE £14,995 9.9 116 151 266 47.1 147

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4410x1830x1680, 57-litre fuel tank, 486-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 4 models in total.

Top Gear on Subaru: Ex-WRC legend rebuilding its brand with chunky, rugged 4x4s. Rally heritage lives on in old-skool WRX.

More of the unfashionable same from Subaru, but that's what owners love. New one is handily sized, very capable.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
2.0D SE	£27,995	9.7	119	150	258	50.4	145	6/10

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4815x1840x1605, 60-litre fue tank, TBA-litre boot, 2 engines, 2 trims, 3 models in total.

WRX STI

The Scooby turbo is back, minus the Impreza name but with the same huge wing and heinous thirst.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
.5T STi	£28,995	5.2	159	300	300	27.2	242	7/10
Euro NCAD n/o LyMANH in mm. 4505y1705y1475 77 litro fuel tonk								

460-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

BRZ

An entirely excellent small, sharp coupe that's not at all like an Impreza. In a good way. Rather like a Toyota GT86.



2.0 SE Lux 2d

PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 £23,995 7.6 130 200 151 36,2 181 9/10 Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4240x1780x1430, 55-litre fuel tank,

FORESTER

Lacks school run glam, but that's not the point - this is rugged transport. Pity the 240bhp XT Turbo is so ignorable.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 2 0D XC £26,995 10.2 118 147 258 47.9 156 Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4560x1780x1700, 64-litre fuel tank, 450/1610-litre boot, 3 engines, 4 trims, 6 models in total.

pGear on Suzuki:

Only the lovable Swift Sport appears to have been fed he enthusiasm from Suzuki's mental motorcycles.

245-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

By not trying too hard, this no-nonsense supermini succeeds in being really rather good. The Sport is back, too. Rejoice!



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 1.6 136 Sport 3d £13,999 8.7 121 136 118 44.1 147

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3850x1700x1510, 45-litre fuel tank, 213/562-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims, 10 models in total.

S-CROSS

Out with the SX4, in with the S-Cross. Same Qashqai-rivalling concept, same slight surprise at how decent it is.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 £16,999 12.0 111 120 236 67.2 110 6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4300x1765x1575, 50-litre fuel tank, 430-litre boot, 2 engines, 4 trims,11 models in total.

This one caught us rather by surprise. Vitara is a perfectly good alternative to a Qashqai or Juke. Well done, Suzuki.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £16,999 11.5 112 120 236 70.6 106 7/10 Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4175x1775x1610, 47-litre fuel

tank, 375/710-litre boot, 2 engine, 3 trims, 7 models in total.

All-electric cars done properly. Model S is so good; you could almost use one as your one and only car. Almost.

I MODEL S

The most credible alternative to the German execs yet launched. Fast, well designed and utterly silent.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £60,535 5.2 140 334 317 N/A O 8/10 P85D £84.535 3.1 155 701 443 N/A

Euro NCAP *****LxWxH in mm: 4970x1964x1445, no fuel tank, 745/1645-litre boot, 3 power outputs, 3 trims, 3 models in total.

ΠΙΥΠΙΔ

TopGear on Toyota: Maker of many boring things. And the GT86. Which is so good, it almost makes up for the rest of 'em.

LAYGO

Citroen C1 with added face fungus. Still cheap, still good around town. Now more capable elsewhere.



LB FT MPG CO2 RATING

10 x 3d £8,695 14.2 99 70 70 68.9 95 1.0 x-cite 5d £11,695 14.2 99 70 70 68.9 95 Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 3455x1615x1460, 35-litre fuel

tank, 168-litre boot, 1 engine, 5 trims, 10 models in total.

PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP

Dinky three-and-a-half person city car designed to take on the Smart Fortwo. It wins, if you have half a mate.



1.33 IQ3 3d £13,100 11.8 106 98 92 57.6 113 7/10 Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 2990x1680x1500, 32-litre fuel tank, 32/242-litre boot, 1 engine, 3 trims, 3 models in total.

YARIS

A key car for Toyota in Europe. The engine choice is reasonable, the Hybrid is OK, but it's not as clever as it used to be.



PRICE 0-62 MPH RHP IR FT MPG CO2 RATING £14,095 11.1 109 98 92 57.6 114 4/10 1.33 Icon 5d

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3890x1700x1510, 42-litre fuel tank, 347/768-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 11 models in total.

The iconic hybrid is clever, clean and economical, especially when it comes to tax. Want seven seats? Try a Prius+.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 RATII 1.8 Plug-in £33,395 13.1 111 98 104 134,5 49 6/10 1.8 Prius+ £26,995 11.8 105 138 105 68.9 96 5/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4460x1750x1490 (Prius+: 4635x1805x1775, 45-litre fuel tank, 445/658-litre boot (Prius+: 505/1425), 1 engine, 4 trims, 6 models in total.

AVENSIS

There's little wrong with the Avensis, just like there's little wrong with your dad's M&S jumper. Mmm, woolly.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 1 6 D-4D £18,850 11.4 112 112 199 67.3 108 5/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4750x1810x1480, 60-litre fuel tank, 510/1609-litre boot, 3 engines, 4 trims, 9 models in total.

ICT86

The best Toyota in donkeys (with a nod of thanks to Subaru). Light 'n' lithe coupe proves that 200bhp is enough.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING £22,700 7.7 140 200 151 36.2 180 £27,500 7.7 140 200 151 36.2 180 8/10 2 0 Aero

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4240x1780x1430, 50-litre fuel tank, 245-litre boot, 1 engine, 4 trims, 4 models in total.

VERSO

Revised in 2013 and does an OK job of moving offspring and their snotty gubbins, but outclassed by the Ford C-Max.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 1.6 D-4D Active £19.990 12.7 115 114 199 62.0 119

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4440x1790x1620, 60-litre fuel tank, 178/1693-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 8 models in total.

LAND CRUISER

Happy in the hands of armed militia and jolly farmers from Lincolnshire. One of the most robust off-roaders ever.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £48,355 11.7 109 171 302 34.9 213

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4760x1885x1890, 87-litre fuel tank, 403/1695-litre boot, 1 engine, 3 trims, 3 models in total

TopGear on Vauxhall: Along with Ford, the bread and butter of British motoring. Thing is, Vauxhall forgets to put tasty fillings in.

They called it the Adam. They should have called it the Cheryl. Cute, but short of panache. Blame its upbringing.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 1.4 100 S/S Slam £14,495 11.5 115 100 96 55.4 119

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3740x1680x1590, 45-litre fuel tank, 170/663-litre boot, 3 engines, 5 trims, 17 models in total.

Vauxhall revives Viva name, but only in the UK. Viva is called Karl elsewhere. Is quite cheap. Also quite cheerful.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £7,995 13.1 108 75 70 62.8 104 6/10

Euro NCAP n/a LxWxH in mm: 3675x1595x1485, 32-litre fuel tank, 206/1013-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 3 models in total

CORSA

Lovely little 1.0-litre turbo, very refined and vastly improved all round. But it's still a Vauxhall. Need we say more?



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP IRFT MPG CO2 1.2 Sting 3d £8,995 16.0 101 70 85 52.3 126 1.oT 90 SE 5d £14,670 11.9 112 90 122 65.7 1.6T 205 VXR 3d £17.995 6.8 143 205 377 174 180 8/10 Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 4020x1736x1479, 45-litre fuel

tank, 285/1120-litre boot, 7 engines, 8 trims, 76 models in total

ASTRA

Avoid gimmicks such as FlexRide and keep it simple with a 1.4 turbo. Watch the costs: like Focus, this is no longer cheap.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 1.4T Sport GTC £19.930 9.0 125 140 147 47.9 139 7/10 2.0T VXR GTC £27,315 5.9 155 280 295 34.9 189 7/10 2.0 BiTurbo £24,220 7.8 141 195 295 55.4 134 6/10

Euro NCAP ****LxWxH in mm: 4420x1810x1510, 56-litre fuel tank, 351/1216-litre boot, 13 engines, 10 trims, 62 models in total.



AMPERA

An electric car that's easy to use and doesn't give you range anxiety (it also contains a 1.4 petrol). Best of breed.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG £33,750 8.7 100 150 273 235,4 27 Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4500x1790x1440, 45-litre fuel

tank, 310/1005-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total

INSIGNIA

The Vectra replacement that changed its name to avoid incrimination in past crimes. Good to drive, smart design.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	C02	RATING
2.8 T VXR SS	£29,824	5.6	170	325	320	25.7	249	6/10
2.0 CDTi Design	£19,334	10.5	127	140	258	76.3	98	6/10
2.0 CDTi SRi ST	£22,794	9.9	133	163	258	62.8	119	6/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4830x1860x1530, 70-litre fuel tank, 530/1470-litre boot, 9 engines, 6 trims, 106 models in total

No-nonsense Aussie saloon is back. TG cheers loudly. Particularly as it now has nearly 600bhp... Strewth.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 6.2 V8 GTS £54,499 4.9 155 584 545 18.5 363 7/10 Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4940x1900x1470, 73-litre fuel tank.

495-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total

Mini-MPV with rear suicide doors to ease child installation and ejection of drunks. Like a Black Cab, minus vomit.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £20.645 9.9 122 136 236 64.2 116 Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4290x1810x1620, 54-litre fuel tank, 400/1500-litre boot, 7 engines, 4 trims, 21 models in total.

ZAFIRA TOURER

Who'd of thunk it? The words 'Zafira' and 'desirable' in the same sentence. Boomerang eyes are locked on S-Max.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	CO2	RATING
2.0 CDTi SRi	£26,090	9.1	129	165	280	54.3	137	7/10
Euro NCAP tank, 420/142								

Tear on Volkswagen: tly brilliant, thoroughly deserving of every accolade ked its way. Up and Golf particular highlights.

Finally, a VW city car you want to own. Neat styling and packaging to shame lkea's finest, we like the Up. A lot.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP IRFT MPG CO2 1.0 Take Up 3d £8,765 14.4 99 60 70 62.8 105 8/10 1.0 Club Up 5d £12.370 13.2 106 75 70 60.1 108

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 3540x1640x1490, 35-litre fuel

tank, 251/951-litre boot, 2 engines, 6 trims, 16 models in total.



Price £104.540

Specs 367bhp, 236lb ft, 0-62mph 4.4secs. VMax 155mph. 134.5mpg. CO. 49g/km

lt's a sports car people, but not as we know it. i8 is enthralling, intoxicating and enjoyable in whole new ways. Think of it as a 918 Spyder for a sixth of the price.

Price £39,694

Specs 275bhp, 213lb ft, 0-62mph 5.7secs. VMax 165mph, 34.4mpg. CO_a 192g/km

The new Cayman is quite probably the most engaging all-round sportscar package available. And that includes big brother 911. Drives beyond beautifully.



Price £73.509 **Specs** 350bhp, 287lb ft, 0-62mph 4.8secs, VMax 179mph, 31.4mpg, CO., 213a/km

The best day-to-day sportscar if you need four seats (well, 2+2-ish), but make sure you can't manage with baby-brother Cayman for £35k less..



NISSAN GT-R

Price £78,020 **Specs** 550bhp. 466lb ft. 0-62mph 2.8secs, VMax 195mph, 24.0mpg, CO., 275g/km

A paragon of brutal go-faster efficiency, the GT-R remains in a class of its own. Not to everyone's taste, but you can't argue with the results. It's very determined.



Price £51,260 **Specs** 335bhp, 332lb ft, 0-62mph 5.5secs, VMax 161mph, 28.8mpg,

The convertible was very good, the coupe is much better. Especially in V8 R quise with 542bhp. Taut, direct, lovely to listen to and beautiful to behold.

VW has created the world's first ecospaceship. Beam us up Scotty, we're ready for lift-off at 300mpg.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 RATING 0.8 TDI Plug-in £94,000 11.9 99 75 103 313 24

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 3970x1682x1184, 10-litre fuel tank, 120-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 1 model in total.

POLO

The Golf's mini-me was facelifted for 2014. It's safe and solid, and now has a (little) bit more soul.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	ВНР	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.0 S 3d	£11,250	15.5	100	60	70	60.1	106	7/10
1.2 TSI SE 5d	£14,360	10.8	114	90	118	60.1	107	8/10
1.8 TSI GTI 3d	£18,850	6.7	146	192	236	47.1	139	7/10
1.4 TDI SE 5d	£15,425	12.9	108	75	155	83.1	88	8/10

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 3970x1682x1462, 45-litre fuel tank, 280/952-litre boot, 9 engines, 8 trims, 32 models in total.

The best done better than ever. You need no other hatchback. So don't waste your time looking.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LB FT	MPG	CO2	RATING	
1.4 ACT GT 5d	£23,850	8.4	131	140	184	58.9	112	8/10	
2.0 GTI 5d	£27,235	6.5	153	220	258	47.1	139	8/10	
2.0 R 5d	£30,805	5.1	155	300	280	39.8	165	9/10	
1.6 TDI Match 5d	£21,390	10.7	119	105	184	74.3	99	8/10	
2.0 GTD 5d	£26,670	7.5	143	184	258	67.3	109	8/10	
Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 4260x1800x1450, 50-litre fuel									

tank, 380/1270-litre boot, 12 engines, 8 trims, 29 models in total

GOLF SV

VW really has called this the Sports Van. It is neither sporty, nor a van. It's a Gol with a bit more. A Golf Plus, if you will.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
4 TSI 125 S	£20,845	9.9	124	125	148	52.3	125	4/10
Euro NCAP	seeseLx\	WxH in	mm:	4338	x1807x	1578.	55-litr	e fuel

tank, 500/1520-litre boot, 8 engines, 4 trims, 11 models in total.

BEETLE

A sportier Beetle? Does that make this a cockroach? Never mind, the retro VW now has a smattering of driver appeal.

driver ap	peal.									
PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING			
£18,575	10.9	112	105	129	51.4	128	6/10			

1.2 TSI Design	£18,575	10.9	112	105	129	51.4	128	6/10	
1.4 TSI Sport	£22,430	8.7	126	150	185	48.7	134	7/10	
Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 4640x1770x1480, 68-litre fuel									

tank, 510-litre boot, 5 engines, 4 trims, 20 models in total.

PASSAT

The driver likes to pretend he's an exec when in truth he's a rep that's made his monthly bonus. Fine car, though.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.6 TDI S	£22,215	10.8	128	120	185	70.6	105	7/10
2.0 TDI S	£23,340	8.7	137	150	251	70.6	106	7/10
2.0 TDI SCR GT	£27,780	6.1	149	190	369	53.3	107	7/10
Furo NCAP **** I xWxH in mm: 4767x1832x1456 59/66-litre fuel								

tank, 586/1152-litre boot, 4 engines, 5 trims, 26 models in total.

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Official fuel consumption for the all-new Volvo XC90 in MPG (1/100km) ranges from: Urban 28.8 (9.8) - 45.6 (6.2), Extra Urban 40.4 (7.9) - 52.3 (5.4), Combined 35.3 (8.0) - 134.5 (2.1). CO2 Emissions range from 186 - 49g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results.

Facelifted CC has dropped the Passat name, but not the underpinnings.
Cheap, able alternative to the Merc CLS.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 2.0 TSI 210 GT £29,290 7.6 150 210 206 38.7 171 7/10 2.0 TDI 177 GT £29,820 8.6 141 177 258 58.9 125

> Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4800x1860x1420, 70-litre fuel tank, 532-litre boot, 4 engines, 2 trims, 5 models in total.

PHAETON

An Audi A8, minus the tosspottery. Makes you feel special, until you sell it for half what you paid six months ago.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 3.0 TDI V6 LWB £58,115 8.3 147 240 367 33.2 224 4/10

Euro NCAP ***** LxWxH in mm: 5060/5180x1900x1450, 90-litre fuel tank, 500-litre boot, 1 engine, 1 trim, 2 models in total.

SCIROCCO

Still great looking, but now resting on a platform two gens behind the Golf. Minor facelift isn't enough to disguise this.



2.0 TSI 280 R £32,580 5.7 155 280 258 35.3 187 2.0 TDI 150 £23 455 8 6 134 150 199 673 109

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4256x1810x1406, 55-litre fuel tank, 312/1006-litre boot, 6 engines, 4 trims, 11 models in total.

TOURAN

A dull but capable MPV in a marketplace where that's all you need. Essentially a big, last-gen Golf with seven seats.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 1.6 TDI 105 SE £23,705 12.8 116 105 185 61.4 121 5/10 2.0 TDI 177 DSG £28,350 8.9 132 177 258 49.6 151 5/10

> Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4397x1794x1634, 60-litre fuel tank, 121/1913-litre boot, 6 engines, 3 trims, 14 models in total.

SHARAN

More VW MPV-ery, this time quite good. It's comfortable, practical, seats seven easily and gets decent engines.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP IR FT MPG 1.4 TSI 150 SE £27,635 10.7 122 150 177 39.2 167 2.0 TDI 177 SE £30,555 9.8 130 177 258 48.7 152

Furo NCAP *** I xWxH in mm: 4850x1900x1720, 70-litre fuel tank, 300/2297-litre boot, 4 engines, 4 trims, 9 models in total.

A baby SUV that's more of a family car than a rough 'n' tough off-roader. Des-tined for the school run, and why not?



PRICE 0-62 MPH RHP IRFT MPG CO2 1.4 TSI 4WD S £23,655 9.2 123 160 177 37.2 178 2.0 TDI Match £27,925 8.9 125 177 258 48.7 151

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4519x1809x1703, 60-litre fuel tank, 470/1510-litre boot, 6 engines, 4 trims, 15 models in total.

TOUAREG

If a large SUV can be inoffensive, this is it. Shares much with the Cayenne, except the price and cock-wafting image.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 3.0 TDI SE £43,415 8.7 128 204 332 42.8 173 3.0 TDI R-Line F48.215 7.3 140 262 373 42.8 174

Euro NCAP *** LxWxH in mm: 4801x1940x1709, 85-litre fuel tank, 493/1555-litre boot, 2 engines, 3 trims, 5 models in total.

TopGear on Volvo: Far removed from Volvo of old, and far more than just boxes on wheels. Even though they are boxy.

Volvo finally pulls its finger out and gets serious about the premium hatchback. We actually quite like these.



	PRICE	0-62	MPH	BHP	LBFT	MPG	G02	RATING
1.5 T2 SE	£22,205	9.2	1118	122	162	51.4	129	7/10
2.0 T5 R-Des L	£31,700	6.0	149	245	258	47.9	137	7/10
2.0 D3 150 SE	£23,770	7.9	130	150	236	74.3	99	8/10

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4370x1800x1450, 52-litre fuel tank, 335/1032-litre boot, 7 engines, 7 trims, 45 models in total.

BEST BHP/TONNE SUB £30K



a Caterham 420R 375 bhp/tonne



o Ginetta G40R 220 bhp



0 Nissan 370Z 217 bhp



0 Seat Leon Cupra SC 200 bhp



O Subaru WRX STi 195 bhp



0 Mini Cooper Hatch JCW 191 bho



(I) Vauxhall Astra VXR 189 bhp



0 Audi TT 230 Sport 187 bhp



Peugeot 208 GTi 179 bhp

0



Ford Focus ST 174 bhp

(III)

S60

At last, a BMW 3-Series rival that's actually a 3-Series size. Good engines, nice interior, but no 3-Series to drive.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP 1.5 T₃ Business £22,490 8.1 130 154 185 48.7 135 6/10 2.0 D4 Business £24,045 7.1 143 190 295 72.8 102 Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4630x1860x1490, 67-litre fuel

tank, 339-litre boot, 8 engines, 5 trims, 36 models in total.

V60

Estate version of the S60, only Volvo insists it's not actually an estate, but a 'sportswagon'. It's an estate, Volvo



PRICE 0-62 MPH RHP IR FT MDC COS 2.0 D4 Business £25,245 7.2 140 190 295 70.6 104 7/10 D6 Twin Engine £49,975 5.8 143 220 325 155 48

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4628x1865x1484. 67-litre fuel tank, 430/1241-litre boot, 6 engines, 9 trims, 36 models in total.

V70/XC70

Close your eyes and think of a Volvo. And here it is – the 21st century incarnation of the classic estate. Now rather off the pace.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP IRFT MPG 2.0 D4 Business £27,195 8.1 137 181 295 67.3 109 5/10 XC70 D5 AWD £39,540 7.5 130 215 309 53.3 139 Furo NCAP *** ** LxWxH in mm· 4820x1860x1550, 70-litre fuel

tank, 575/1600-litre boot, 5 engines, 4 trims, 28 models in total.

S80

A posh saloon for people who don't want to buy German. It's comfy and well-finished, but zero fun.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 2.0 D4 SE Nav £32,220 7.9 140 181 295 70.6 104

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4850x1860x1490, 70-litre fuel tank, 442-litre boot, 1 engine, 2 trims, 2 models in total.

XC60

Mid-size SUV stuffed with health and safety kit. It should come in fluoro yellow with a loud hailer as standard.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 2.0 D4 SE Lux £34,360 7.6 130 190 295 62.8 117

Euro NCAP **** LxWxH in mm: 4630x1860x1490, 70-litre fuel tank, 495/1455-litre boot, 3 engines, 4 trims, 14 models in total.

XC90

Everything we hoped it would be, and more besides. Superb safety systems, fantastic tech and practicality.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LBFT MPG CO2 £45,750 7.4 137 228 347 49.6 149 2.0 T6 £49,205 6.1 143 324 295 36.7 179 2.0 T8 £59.955 5.3 140 406 295 104.6 99

Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 4950x2008x1776, 50/71-litre fuel tank, 397/1951-litre boot, 3 engines, 3 trims, 9 models in total.

DATA IN NUMBERS: SWITCHED ON

→ XC90 D5 149g/km C0 → XC90 T8 49g/km CO.

TopGear on Zenos: Upstart staffed by ex-Caterham execs. It shows Ford-engined E10 is admirably well-executed.



What do you get when former Caterham chiefs leave to design their own car? Um, a 21st century Caterham.



PRICE 0-62 MPH BHP LB FT MPG CO2 £24,995 4.5 135 200 154 n/a n/a Euro NCAP n/a, LxWxH in mm: 3800x1870x1130, n/a-litre fuel

DATA IN NUMBERS: SMART STUFF

- → Zenos E10 kerbweight 700k
- → Smart Fortwo 1.0 kerbweight 880kg



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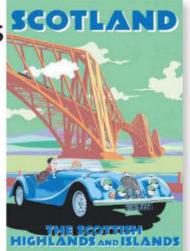
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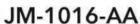
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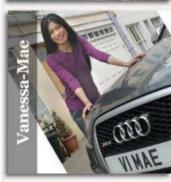
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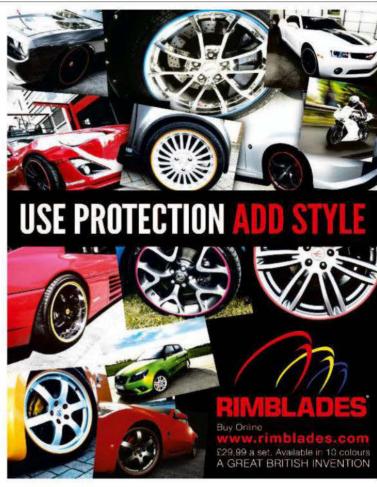
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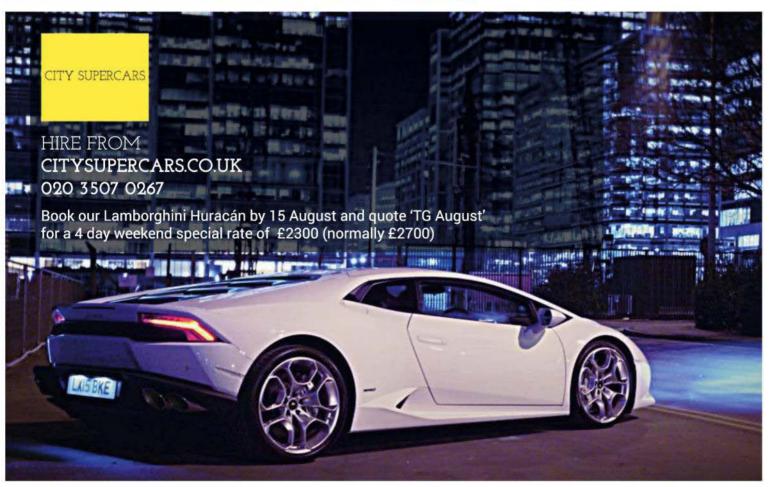
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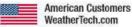
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CJ300 Specification Jeep 1941 Alloy Wheels 7.5x17" in Satin Black, 4 Slot Chelsea Truck Company Grille, Front Grille Industrial Mesh, Side Wing Blades in Carbon Finish, Fuel Filler Cap in Satin Black, Chelsea Truck Company Spare Wheel Cover, Front & Rear Seats in Quilted & Perforated Leather with Matching Stitching, Door Entry Sill Plates in Stainless Steel, Vented Foot Pedals in Machined Aluminium, Floor Mats in Toughened Rubber, Brake Calipers in Liquid Red, Smoked Headlamps & KAHN Vehicle Branding.



Wide Track Specification: 1948 Defend Alloy Wheels 8x16" in Satin Black, Front & Rear Wide Wings with Integrated Vents & Bolt Apertures, X-Lander Front Grille & Headlamp Surrounds, Bonnet & Side Vents with Mesh. Front Sports GTB Seats & Rear Folding Seats in a Choice of Quilted & Perforated Leather with Harris Tweed, Centre Glove Box & Instrument Binnacle in Quilted & Perforated Leather, Roof Grab Handles with Harris Tweed, Rear Door Panel, & Handle in Harris Tweed, Rear Passenger Knee Protectors, Vented Foot Pedals in Machined Aluminium, Door Entry Sill Plates in Stainless Steel, Single Spoke Steering Wheel - Leather, Rev Counter Facia in Red, Churchill Time Clock, Hard Wearing Front & Rear Cabin Floor Mats & KAHN Vehicle Branding.

Notes:

Jeep CJ300/400 Images shown with optional: mud terrain tyres (only for off road use), LED Daytime Running Lights & Diamond LED Military Headlights.

Defender Chelsea Wide Track shown with optional: 9"x20" Mondial Alloy Wheels in Piano Black and Diamond Cut, Front Bumper Replacement, Sump Guard & Crosshair Exhaust System in Stainless Steel inc. Mudflaps.







www.chelseatruckcompany.com





Factory Sahara Specification: 5 Speed Automatic Transmission, Air Conditioning, with Auto Temperature Control, Anti-Lock 4 Wheel Disc HD Brakes, Automatic Headlight Activation, Brake Disc Ventilation, Cruise Control, Driver & Front Passenger Air Bags, Electronic Stability Control, Hill Descent Control, Hill Start Assist, Infinity Premium Audio, System, Keyless Entry with Immobiliser Split Level Targa Roof & Removable Hard Top.





Factory Specification: 2.2 Litre 4 Cylinder Diesel Engine, 6 Speed Manual Gearbox, Air Conditioning, All Terrain Anti-Lock Braking System, Audio System, Driver & Front Passenger Sun Visors, Electric Front Windows, Electronic Traction Control (ETC), Front Axle Two Pin Differential, Front Mudflaps, Halogen Headlamps, Heated Front Seats, Heated Rear Screen, Heated Windscreen, Locking Wheel Nuts, Manual Adjustable Exterior Mirrors, Manual Dipping Interior Rear View Mirror, Perimetric/Volumetric Alarm, Power Assisted Steering, Rear Door Stowage Net, Rear Folding Step, Rear Mudflaps, Rear Quarter Windows, Remote Central Locking, Side Runners, Standard Duty Suspension, Station Wagon Roof, Tinted Glass Front & Side & Windscreen Wash/Wipe System.

All prices exclude Road Fund Licence and a First Registration Fee at the current rate (Government Charge). Available in **Left Hand Drive**All new vehicles are VAT qualifying. Applies to UK vehicles only. Prices correct at time of going to press and may be subject to change.
To view all available vehicles please visit: www.chelseatruckcompany.com



1948 Defend 8" x 16"



1983 Defend 8" x 18"



Mondial Defend



Jeep 1988 8.5" x 20"



Jeep 1986 9" x 20"







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Official fuel consumption for the SEAT Leon ST CUPRA in mpg (litres per 100km); urban 32.1 (8.8) - 33.6 (8.4); extra-urban 50.4 (5.6) - 49.6 (6.6); combined 42.2 (6.7) - 42.8 (6.6). CO_2 emissions 157 - 154 g/km.